

OTTAWA WINDOW PROS

Ottawa Neighbourhoods

Window considerations across Kanata, Barrhaven,
the Glebe, Orleans and beyond

8 Expert Answers from Construction Brain

ottawawindowinstall.ca/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. My Barrhaven home is only 10 years old but the windows are failing - is this normal?
.....
2. Everyone in Westboro seems to have black window frames - is that actually a good choice?
.....
3. What kind of hoops do I have to jump through for window replacement in New Edinburgh?
.....
4. The windows in my Sandy Hill duplex are 80 years old - can I even get replacements that fit?
.....
5. We just moved to Stittsville and the builder-grade windows are terrible - what should I know?
.....
6. My business is in the ByWard Market - do I need a permit just to replace a window?
.....
7. Are window sizes in Orleans subdivisions standardized or all different?
.....
8. Does my Kanata townhouse condo board need to approve window replacements?
.....

Q1

My Barrhaven home is only 10 years old but the windows are failing - is this normal?

Unfortunately, yes - window failures in 10-year-old homes are more common than they should be, especially in Ottawa's harsh climate. Many builders use minimum-grade windows to keep costs down, and these often start showing problems within 5-15 years.

The most common failures you're likely seeing include **seal failures in double-pane glass** (causing fogging between panes), **hardware problems** like handles breaking or windows not staying open, **weatherstripping deterioration** leading to drafts, and **frame warping or cracking** from Ottawa's extreme temperature swings. In Barrhaven specifically, many homes from that era used vinyl windows with welded corners that can separate over time.

Ottawa's climate is particularly tough on windows - we see temperature swings from -30°C to +35°C, plus significant humidity changes throughout the year. **Windows that might last 20 years in milder climates often fail much sooner here.** The thermal expansion and contraction, combined with ice buildup and UV exposure, puts tremendous stress on seals and frames.

Builder-grade windows typically use thinner glass, basic weatherstripping, and lower-quality hardware compared to replacement windows. They're designed to meet minimum building code requirements and pass initial inspections, not necessarily to last decades in our climate. Many use single-seal glass units instead of dual-seal, making them more prone to moisture infiltration.

The good news is that **modern replacement windows are significantly better** than what was commonly installed 10 years ago. Today's quality windows feature triple-pane glass, advanced Low-E coatings, superior weatherstripping, and much better hardware. You'll likely see dramatic improvements in energy efficiency, comfort, and durability.

For a read on what's actually failing, request a free quote through Ottawa Window Pros — an installer can work out the cause and recommend what's worth doing about it on a Barrhaven home of that age.

Q2

Everyone in Westboro seems to have black window frames - is that actually a good choice?

Black window frames are extremely popular in Westboro and across Ottawa right now, and there are both practical and aesthetic reasons why they've become the go-to choice for many homeowners.

From a design perspective, black frames create a crisp, modern look that works beautifully with both contemporary and traditional Ottawa home styles. They provide strong contrast against lighter siding colors, make windows appear larger, and create clean sight lines that many homeowners love. Black frames also tend to be more forgiving with dirt and wear compared to white frames, which can show scuffs and discoloration over time.

However, there are some practical considerations for Ottawa's climate. Black frames absorb more heat from sunlight, which can cause slightly more thermal expansion and contraction compared to lighter colors. Quality vinyl or fiberglass frames are engineered to handle this, but it's something to consider. The heat absorption can actually be beneficial in winter, helping with passive solar heating, though the effect is minimal.

For Ottawa specifically, black frames work well because they complement the mix of brick, stone, and siding common in neighborhoods like Westboro. They're particularly striking against the red brick and limestone you see throughout the area. Most manufacturers now offer excellent black frame options in vinyl, fiberglass, and aluminum that are specifically designed for Canadian climates.

The key is choosing quality frames with proper reinforcement and UV-resistant finishes. Premium black vinyl frames from manufacturers like Jeld-Wen or Marvin perform excellently in Ottawa's temperature swings from -30°C to +35°C.

If you're considering black frames for your Westboro home, they're definitely a solid choice both aesthetically and practically when you select quality products designed for our climate.

Q3

What kind of hoops do I have to jump through for window replacement in New Edinburgh?

Most window replacements in New Edinburgh don't require permits or special approvals - you're typically just swapping existing windows for new ones in the same openings.

For standard **like-for-like window replacement** in New Edinburgh, you won't need building permits from the City of Ottawa. This covers most residential window projects where you're replacing old windows with new ones of similar size in existing openings. The work can proceed once you've selected your contractor and products.

However, New Edinburgh has some unique considerations as a heritage-sensitive neighborhood. While there aren't formal heritage restrictions on most residential properties, **the community takes pride in maintaining architectural character**. Many homeowners choose window styles that complement the area's historic charm - think traditional divided lite patterns or classic proportions rather than large picture windows.

Ottawa's climate zone requirements still apply regardless of neighborhood. You'll want triple-pane windows with Low-E coatings and proper air sealing to handle our harsh winters. The good news is that modern energy-efficient windows can look traditional while performing far better than original windows from the early 1900s.

Permits are only required if you're enlarging window openings, adding new windows, or making structural changes to walls. For these situations, your installer would handle the permit application through Ottawa Building Services.

The main "hoop" is simply **choosing an experienced, WSIB-insured installer** who understands proper installation techniques for Ottawa's climate. Poor installation can lead to air leaks, condensation, and energy loss - much more problematic than any paperwork.

For a free estimate on your New Edinburgh window replacement, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros to discuss your specific project and ensure you're getting the right products for both performance and neighborhood aesthetics.

Q4

The windows in my Sandy Hill duplex are 80 years old - can I even get replacements that fit?

Yes, you can absolutely get replacement windows for your 80-year-old Sandy Hill duplex. While the original openings may have non-standard dimensions, modern window manufacturers offer custom sizing to fit virtually any existing opening.

Custom sizing is the standard solution for heritage and older homes in Ottawa's established neighborhoods like Sandy Hill. Window manufacturers measure your existing rough openings and fabricate windows to fit precisely, eliminating the need for major structural modifications. This approach preserves the character of your heritage duplex while dramatically improving energy efficiency and functionality.

Sandy Hill's housing stock from the 1940s typically features wood-framed windows that may have settled or shifted over the decades. A professional installer will measure each opening individually, as dimensions often vary even within the same house. The replacement process usually involves removing the old window and frame, then installing a new window system that fits the existing rough opening.

For an 80-year-old duplex, you're likely looking at significant energy savings with modern replacement windows. Original single-pane windows from that era have virtually no insulation value compared to today's triple-pane, Low-E coated windows with argon fill. In Ottawa's climate, this upgrade could reduce your heating costs by 15-25% while eliminating drafts and condensation issues.

The key is working with experienced installers who understand heritage properties and can navigate any unique challenges your duplex presents. Some windows may require minor trim work or insulation upgrades, but structural changes are rarely necessary for straight replacements.

For a free assessment of your Sandy Hill duplex windows and custom sizing options, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros - we specialize in heritage home window replacements throughout Ottawa's established neighborhoods.

Q5

We just moved to Stittsville and the builder-grade windows are terrible - what should I know?

Builder-grade windows in new Stittsville homes are notorious for being the bare minimum to meet code - you're definitely not alone in wanting to upgrade them for better comfort and energy efficiency.

Most builder-grade windows are basic double-pane units with minimal Low-E coating and standard frames that create cold spots and drafts. The good news is that replacing them is straightforward since you're working with standard sizes and existing rough openings. In Stittsville's climate, upgrading to quality triple-pane windows with proper Low-E coatings and argon fill will make a dramatic difference in comfort and energy bills.

For Ottawa's Climate Zone 6, you'll want windows with a U-factor of 1.22 or lower to qualify for ENERGY STAR certification and potential Canada Greener Homes Grant rebates. Quality vinyl or fiberglass frames perform much better than the thin aluminum or basic vinyl typically used by builders. Triple-pane glass with Low-E coatings will eliminate those cold drafts near windows and reduce condensation issues common with builder-grade units.

In the Stittsville market, expect to invest \$600-\$1,200 per window for a significant upgrade to premium double or triple-pane units. Since your home is new, the window sizes should be standard, which keeps costs reasonable. Many Stittsville homeowners tackle this project within 2-3 years of moving in, often starting with the most problematic windows like large living room or bedroom windows where you notice the biggest comfort issues.

Start by identifying your worst-performing windows - typically the largest ones or those facing north/west where you feel the most drafts. No permits are needed for direct replacement in existing openings. For a free assessment of your current windows and upgrade options, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros to see exactly what improvements would benefit your specific home.

Q6

My business is in the ByWard Market - do I need a permit just to replace a window?

Most window replacements in existing openings don't require permits in Ottawa, including for businesses in the ByWard Market. You're simply swapping out the old window for a new one in the same rough opening.

However, the **ByWard Market Heritage Conservation District** adds an extra layer of requirements. Since your business is in this protected heritage area, you'll need to consider both building code requirements and heritage guidelines. The heritage district has specific rules about maintaining the historical character of buildings, which can affect window replacement choices.

For standard window replacement (same size, same opening), you typically won't need a building permit, but you may need heritage approval if your building contributes to the district's character or if you're changing the window style, materials, or appearance. The City's Heritage Planning staff review these applications to ensure new windows are compatible with the heritage character.

You will need permits if you're:

- Creating new window openings
- Enlarging existing openings
- Making structural changes to accommodate different window sizes
- Significantly altering the building's appearance

Ottawa-specific considerations for ByWard Market businesses include ensuring your new windows meet both energy efficiency standards for our Climate Zone 6 requirements and any heritage district aesthetic guidelines. Many heritage-appropriate windows now come with modern energy efficiency features that satisfy both requirements.

City of Ottawa requirements may vary based on your specific building and its heritage designation - confirm with both Ottawa Building Services and Heritage Planning staff before proceeding. For a business window replacement project in the heritage district, we'd recommend getting professional guidance to navigate both the technical and heritage approval processes.

Find a Window Installation Contractor

Ottawa Window Install connects you with experienced contractors through the <https://justynrookcontracting.com>:

- Humble Homes - property maintenance ?
- Somar Contracting Inc. ?
- Leeds Property Maintenance ?

[View all windows-doors contractors ?](#)

Are window sizes in Orleans subdivisions standardized or all different?

Window sizes in Orleans subdivisions are generally standardized within each development, but vary significantly between different builders and time periods. Most production builders use standard window sizes to control costs and streamline construction.

Typical standardization patterns you'll find in Orleans include common sizes like 24"x36", 30"x48", 36"x60" for casement windows, and standard slider sizes like 36"x24" and 48"x36". Builders like Minto, Richcraft, and Phoenix typically stick to 4-6 standard sizes throughout an entire subdivision to maximize efficiency. This means if your neighbor has the same floor plan from the same builder, your windows are likely identical sizes.

However, significant variations exist between different subdivisions and builders. A Minto home in Avalon might use completely different standard sizes than a Cardel home in Blackstone. The construction era also matters - homes built in the 1990s often have different standard sizes than those built in the 2010s, as energy codes and builder preferences evolved.

For Orleans homeowners, this standardization within subdivisions can be advantageous for replacement projects. If you're replacing multiple windows, you'll likely need fewer different sizes, which can reduce costs. Many window suppliers stock the most common Orleans builder sizes, potentially shortening lead times.

The best approach is to have all your windows professionally measured rather than assuming they match your neighbor's. Even "standard" sizes can vary by half-inches due to framing differences, and accurate measurements are crucial for proper fit and energy efficiency.

For a free estimate and professional measuring of your Orleans home's windows, request a quote from Ottawa Window Pros - we're familiar with all the common builder standards throughout Orleans subdivisions.

Find a Window Installation Contractor

Ottawa Window Install connects you with experienced contractors through the <https://justynrookcontracting.com>:

- 613Bins ?
- Northline Windows ?
- The Deck Store Inc ?

[View all windows-doors contractors ?](#)

Does my Kanata townhouse condo board need to approve window replacements?

Yes, your Kanata townhouse condo board will likely need to approve window replacements, even if you're only replacing windows in the same size opening. Most condominium corporations in Ontario require approval for exterior modifications, and windows are typically considered part of the building's exterior envelope.

Condo approval requirements vary significantly between corporations, but most boards want to ensure consistency in appearance and quality across the development. Some boards have pre-approved specific window styles, colors, and manufacturers that maintain the building's aesthetic. Others require you to submit detailed specifications and may charge an application fee for review.

The approval process typically involves submitting your proposed window specifications, installation timeline, and contractor information to the property management company or board. They'll review whether your choices meet the corporation's standards for appearance, energy efficiency, and installation quality. This process can take 2-4 weeks, so factor this into your project timeline.

Ottawa's climate considerations make this approval process particularly important for condos. Boards often specify minimum energy efficiency requirements like triple-pane glass or specific U-factor ratings to maintain the building's overall energy performance. Many Kanata developments built in recent decades already have quality windows, so boards may require matching or upgrading to similar performance levels.

Before starting your project, review your condo's declaration and bylaws, which outline specific requirements for exterior modifications. Contact your property management company to understand the approval process and any pre-approved options. For condo-approved options in Kanata, request a free quote through Ottawa Window Pros and ask the installer how they have handled board requirements on similar townhouses.

Find a Window Installation Contractor

Ottawa Window Install connects you with experienced contractors through the <https://justynrookcontracting.com>:

- Valcor Construction ?
- Callandgone
- Eastern Residential Solution ?

[View all windows-doors contractors ?](#)

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Window Pros. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any construction or renovation project. Information is current as of October 11, 2026 and may change. Visit ottawawindowinstall.ca for the latest answers.