

Cypress Point Lakes Home Owners Association

So you want new windows?

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The first thing to remember about replacing your windows, as with **all** unit modifications, is that you ***must have approval from the Architectural Control Committee (ACC)***. You may mail your request to Community Management, or send an email to them. ***You may not proceed*** with replacing your windows until you receive approval from the ACC.

Reasons you might have for replacing your windows:

Q: I have drafts from around the window frame, or from between the window panels.

A: Getting new windows will definitely help you here. New windows will seal tightly and have no leaks around the frame.

Q: I don't like the look of the aluminum frames, and want my new windows to have a different frame color.

A: All windows must be clear coated anodized aluminum to maintain the integrity of the visual appeal of the buildings. Different colored window frames on the same building just plain look ugly. The ACC will not approve any requests for non-aluminum windows.

Q: I want to reduce the noise I hear from outside.

A: New dual glazed windows will help here, but maybe not as much as you expect. Dual glazed windows reduce, but do not eliminate sounds. Sound transmission in windows is rated by a measurement called "STC" – the higher the STC number, the more sound will be eliminated. Check with your window vendor about the STC rating of the windows you are looking at, and if there are any options to increase this rating.

As with most perceptual things, you will get accustomed to the sound transmission through your new windows, and may not realize how much sound they reduce until you visit a neighbor with old windows.

Sound also enters your unit through the doors, floors, ceilings and walls. Replacing your windows won't help any of these areas.

Q: I want to replace my windows next month.

A: Getting new windows takes time. Your new windows will have to be custom ordered, as they are not a standard size. The lead time on orders can take anywhere from 6-12 weeks, depending on the time of year and the manufacturer's backlog. You will also have to arrange a time with your installer after your new windows arrive. This could also take several weeks.

Q: How do I compare windows?

A: Windows should have a label on them from the National Fenestration Rating Council (<http://www.nfrc.org>). This label will have several measurement numbers on it that help you compare windows.

Q: I want to reduce the Solar Heat Gain from the sun when it shines through my windows.

A: The term that measures Solar Heat Gain is called the “Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC)” – the lower this number is, the less heat is transferred. The type of glass that lowers the SHGC is called “Low-E” glass.

Note that with Low-E glass, visible light is also reduced. If you have a unit that does not receive direct sunlight, or is very dark, you may want to consider NOT getting Low-E glass, as it will make your unit darker. Although Low-E glass is mandated under new building codes, you do have the option of not getting Low-E since new windows are a retrofit, and fall under the old building codes as of the time our units were built.

There is a second type of Low-E glass called Spectrally Selective Glass, which blocks the heat producing frequencies of light without reducing visible light as much as regular Low-E glass. Check with you window vendor, as not all manufacturers offer this type of glass.

The term used to rate light transmission is called “Visible Transmittance” and measures the percent of visible light that is transmitted through the window. It ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 representing no light, and 1 representing full light transmission. A typical clear dual glazed window transmits about 81% (or .81) of the light that shines on it. Your current single pane windows transmit about 90% (or .90) of light. If you choose to get Low-E glass, pay attention to this number when comparing windows to see how much they will reduce the light in your unit.

Q: I want to reduce heat loss from my unit in the winter.

A: This is another case of new dual glazed windows helping, but maybe not as much as you think.

Although dual glazed windows will reduce heat loss, most of the heat in your unit is lost through the ceiling, not your windows. Whether or not new windows will significantly help depends on what you have done to reduce ceiling heat loss:

- a. If you are a lower unit, and have had blown-in cellulose insulation installed in your ceiling, then your windows would be your largest heat loss, and you will probably see a benefit from new dual glazed windows.
- b. If you are a lower unit and have not insulated your ceiling, you probably won't see much heat loss benefit from new windows, as most of your heat is lost to your upstairs neighbor.
- c. If you are an upstairs Phase 2 unit, and have not replaced the original loose fiberglass insulation with insulation batting, you are losing most of your heat through your ceiling. Even if you have added additional loose fiberglass insulation, you are probably losing most of your heat through your ceiling, as loose fiberglass is not a great insulator. New windows won't help much here for heat loss.
- d. If you are an upstairs Phase 2 unit, and have replaced the original insulation with insulation batting (PGE recommends R-30 rated insulation bats for ceilings where space permits), you will see a further reduction in heat loss from installing dual glazed windows.
- e. If you are a Phase 1 upstairs unit, you can't insulate your ceiling, as the ceiling construction does not allow it.

Heat is also lost if you have drafts around your front door – check you weather stripping and draft blocker to ensure your entry door reduces air leakage as much as possible.

Q: The window vendor/installer I contacted says aluminum windows are not legal/unsafe/inefficient/etc.

A: Although aluminum windows are no longer allowed for new construction, they are allowed for retrofits such as our complex. The windows are safe, and although aluminum is not the most efficient heat insulator, there are many factors that affect a window's insulation properties – look at the U-Factor rating, not the frame material.

After reading all the above, I still want to get new windows!

First, before going any further, **you must obtain approval from the Architectural Control Committee**. You may not proceed with replacing your windows until you receive approval to do so. Your request should include your contact information, as well as a statement of the windows you plan on installing (i.e. single or dual glazed, clear anodized aluminum frame).

You should be aware that although there are many good window vendors out there, there are also many bad ones. The aluminum frame windows you need are not sold by all vendors.

Like car salesmen, window vendors can only sell you the window brands they offer, so they will do everything possible to get you to buy the brand of window that they sell, even if they don't sell aluminum windows. Unfortunately, the HOA has heard from homeowners where the vendor has outright lied to them in order to try and make a sale.

The HOA knows of only two manufacturers in California who make aluminum framed dual glazed windows:

Milgard

<http://www.milgard.com>

(800) MILGARD or (800) 645-4273

International Window Corporation

<http://www.intlwindow.com/>

(562)928-6411 or (714)523-8755

To avoid problems with window vendors/installers, the HOA highly recommends you use a Manufacturer's Recommended Installer, or a contractor recommended by the HOA. You may obtain a list of recommended installers by visiting the manufacturer's website, or by calling them.

Here are a couple of window installers that have done work successfully at CPL complex. You are free to look at others.

Wholesale Windows - 2200 Lafayette St #2, Santa Clara, CA 95050 (408) 654-9410

Able Glass - 850 Aldo Ave, Santa Clara, CA 95054 (408) 496-9960

Once you have obtained a recommended installer list, you will want to get as many quotes as possible – you will be surprised how pricing varies from vendor to vendor when quoting the exact same windows. Also, some installers do not do work on Condominium units.

Most vendors/installers will give you a free quote, **IF** you buy windows from them. Otherwise they charge you

for the estimate. To get around this, simply measure your windows and provide these measurements to all the vendors you get quotes from – that way you will be comparing apples to apples. Once you have chosen your vendor, you can have them come and do a real measurement for a final quote.

Be aware that you, the homeowner, are responsible for all installation costs. This includes repairing or replacing window trim if it is damaged or broken when it is removed during the installation process. Note that all our window trim is redwood, not the typical lumber you get at Home Depot, and must be replaced with redwood. You must also repaint around your windows once they are installed to cover up the caulk, nail holes and to make the trim look uniform again.

Q. I need to replace my window screens or my sliding screen door?

A. If you need to replace your existing window screens or your screen sliding door, they must be silver in color to match the existing windows. Here is a resource that has aluminum or silver sliding screen doors. Several homeowners have used this company successfully. You may find others.

Bull Glass and Screen Door Company - 1362 S De Anza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129 (408) 725-4070