

About Windows

Property owners often want to replace rather than restore the historic windows in their buildings. Concerns about lead paint and energy efficiency drive this preference, but leading historic preservation organizations suggest window restoration is not only safe, energy efficient, and economical but also preserves the overall historic character. The Local Historic District Commission members will aid property owners in determining the age of their building's windows.

Pre-1920 windows contribute to the overall historic character by their workmanship and relationship to architectural style. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/windows01.htm#identify> and the National Trust for Historic Preservation section on windows <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/weatherization/windows/> give overviews on windows' historic significance and restoration.

Other weatherization methods such as insulating basements and attics give more energy savings than window replacement. Weather stripping, caulking, and storm windows are two ways to block heat loss. Storm windows on historic windows do pass Newburyport's new "stretch energy" building code.

If lead paint is a concern, the Study Committee notes that testing is available.¹ Professional window restorers are able to strip old paint and to repaint wood to meet lead abatement standards. The Committee recommends the following website for in-depth information:

http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/lead-paint/additional-resources/lead_paint_wooden_windows.pdf

¹ See <http://www.epsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/5054.html> for one explanation of lead testing.