

## Key factors to consider when installing a protective covering for stained glass windows

How accessible are the windows? Does scaffolding need to be used?

How many windows are to be covered?

What is the size of the window?

What is the method of installation of the protective covering? Will it be cut to follow the window tracery or will it cover over the architectural details in a grid-like design (which in most instances is not aesthetically desirable)?

What type of frame surrounds the windows (e.g., stone, wood, metal)?

Which type of protective covering will be used and of what thickness?

If the frames are wood, do they first need to be painted? Or even replaced, if the wood is rotting?

How much traveling time is involved in getting to and from the church?

If Lexan is selected as the protective covering material to be used, need it be used for windows at a great height merely because it is also being used for street level windows? The danger of vandalism and breakage is much decreased for the more elevated window, and the less expensive Plexiglas can be used at that height.

Will the ventilators be replaced? If there are many ventilators in the sanctuary, is it necessary to continue to use all of them, or can some be permanently sealed? If the latter, this will reduce cost.

Will a protective covering conserve energy? The answer is clearly yes. Is it worth it? Yes, over time the installation depends on each church's fuel consumption and conservation methods. Protective covering is an expensive proposition, ranging from a \$500 project to a \$75,000 project. However, it provides multi-faceted advantages for a church, making a full analysis of its real worth to a congregation somewhat difficult to evaluate.

It is good to vent the air between the stained glass and the protective material. Typically holes are drilled into the plastic and 1" diameter aluminum screens are inserted. These are placed along the bottom and the top of a window. When using glass, either a soffit louver can be used along the top and the bottom or the corners can be cut off and screen mesh installed. It is important that air circulates along the entire surface of the leaded glass.