APEX WINDOW WERKS

WOOD WINDOW REPAIR • THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Wood Window Repair — The Complete Guide

Our repair process, what to expect from an Apex visit, and what wood window repair costs in Chicagoland.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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The 11-step Apex restoration process, the materials we specify by name (Sarco, Abatron, Sherwin-Williams), and the comparison vs. a replacement-only company.

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PART 3 • COST & SCOPE REFERENCE
Chicagoland pricing for typical repairs, full-restoration tier pricing, and how to compare an Apex quote to a replacement-only quote.

APEXWINDOWWERKS.COM
(847) 557-9600

WHEELING, IL • CHICAGOLAND
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PART 1

How Apex Repairs a Wood Window

Our 11-step restoration process, the materials we specify by name, and what separates a repair from a sales-driven replacement.

01 • THE REPAIR-FIRST COMMITMENT

Before Apex begins any work on a wood window, we evaluate whether the original sash and frame can be repaired. In the great majority of cases — approximately 9 out of 10 wood windows we look at in Chicago-area homes — the answer is yes.

This is the opposite of a replacement-only sales call. We do not start from the assumption that the window has to come out. We start from the assumption that it should stay, and we evaluate whether anything we find moves us off that position.

What gets repaired vs. what gets replaced

- **Sash with localized rot** → repaired (Dutchman splice or epoxy consolidation).
- **Sash painted shut or with broken cord** → repaired (re-cord, free, weatherstrip).
- **Frame intact, sash beyond repair** → new sash milled to match, frame kept.
- **Frame structurally failed** → in-kind replacement, matched to the building.
- **Window is already a non-original replacement** → different conversation; we will tell you so.

02 • THE APEX RESTORATION PROCESS

Each window goes through the same 11-step sequence. We follow this order even on small jobs — the order is what keeps the work durable.

#	Stage	What we do	Typical time
1	**Assessment**	Document the window's condition, photograph each side, measure the opening, and identify which components are original versus previously replaced.	20–30 min
2	**Sash removal**	Score the paint film, remove interior stops, and lift the sash from the frame. Sashes are tagged by location — they go back into the same opening they came from.	15–25 min
3	**Paint stripping**	Failed paint removed with infrared heat (no open flame, no high-heat lead vapor). HEPA-vacuum capture on all dust generation.	45–90 min
4	**Glazing removal**	Old linseed putty softened with controlled heat and pulled. Glass released, cleaned, labeled by light, and stored in protective crates.	30–60 min
5	**Wood repair**	Punky wood saturated with epoxy consolidant. Sections beyond consolidation get a Dutchman splice in matched old-growth pine, milled to the original profile.	1–3 hrs

6	**Sand & prime**	Sashes sanded 80 → 120 → 240 grit. Bare wood primed with an oil-based primer that seals knots and stabilizes the substrate for the top coat.	**45–75 min**
7	**Re-glaze**	New linseed putty bedded under the glass; glass set with corrosion-resistant points every 10–12 inches; exterior bevel tooled to 45° to shed water.	**30–60 min/sash**
8	**Balance rebuild**	Sash cord (or chain on heavier sashes) pulled, weights inspected, new cord knotted at the weight and re-set into the sash. Pulleys cleaned and lubricated.	**30–45 min/window**
9	**Weatherstripping**	Interlocking bronze or spring-bronze installed at the meeting rail, sides, and sill. This is the work that actually closes the air-leakage path.	**45–60 min**
10	**Finish coats**	Two coats of exterior-grade enamel on bare wood, painted across the putty bevel to seal it. Wet edge maintained, 240-grit between coats.	**1.5–2 hrs**
11	**Reassembly & QC**	Sash re-hung in the original opening. Movement tested in both directions, lock engaged, weatherstripping seated. Final inspection and customer walk-through.	**30–45 min**

03 • MATERIALS WE SPECIFY BY NAME

A restoration is only as durable as the materials it uses. Apex specifies the same products on every job — products with proven service histories on historic wood windows. The brand names below are what we put in the bid; if a homeowner asks, we can sometimes substitute equivalents, but we will not down-spec.

Use	Product class	What we use	Why
Glazing compound	Traditional linseed-oil putty	Sarco Type M (or equivalent)	Cures slowly, bonds to wood and glass, lasts 60+ years
Wood consolidant	Two-part epoxy penetrant	Abatron LiquidWood / equivalent	Saturates punky wood and restores structural integrity
Wood filler	Two-part structural epoxy	Abatron WoodEpox / equivalent	Can be milled, drilled, and sanded once cured
Primer	Oil-based exterior wood primer	Sherwin-Williams Exterior Oil Primer	Seals knots and creates a bond layer over bare and patched wood
Topcoat	Exterior alkyd or acrylic enamel	Sherwin-Williams Emerald / Benjamin Moore equivalent	Color-matched; flexes with seasonal wood movement

Weatherstripping	Interlocking bronze and spring-bronze	Resource Conservation Technology (or equivalent)	Closes the air-leakage path without altering the sash profile
Sash cord	Solid-braid cotton sash cord	Samson #8 sash cord	Original specification; weights ride on it cleanly for decades
Sash chain	Heavy-duty brass sash chain	Sash chain #25 (where chain is required)	Used on greystone-weight sashes where cord would fatigue
Glazing points	Push-points and triangular points	Bedford diamond points	Corrosion-resistant; do not stain putty over time
Hardware finish	Cleaned original; bronze if replacement	Original sash locks and lifts preserved	Original hardware is part of the window's value — kept where possible

04 • APEX vs. A REPLACEMENT-ONLY COMPANY

Most companies that advertise "window services" in the Chicago area do not repair wood windows. They sell replacements. The comparison below is what makes restoration a different category of work.

	Apex (restoration)	Replacement-only company
First step on a service call	Inspect original sash and frame	Measure for a replacement unit
Default recommendation	Repair where the frame is sound	Replace the whole window
Glazing method	Linseed putty bedded under and over the glass	Caulk-and-stop, or rubber gasket on a new IGU
Sash material if replaced	Old-growth-equivalent wood, milled to original profile	Vinyl or composite, factory profile
Counterbalance	Original weights re-corded; pulleys serviced	Original weights discarded; new spring balance
Art-glass / leaded transoms	Removed, stored, re-leaded if needed, re-installed	Often discarded with the old sash
Lead-paint procedure	EPA RRP containment on every pre-1978 home	Varies; not always RRP-certified
Expected service life	50–80 years on a restored sash	20–25 years (vinyl) / 30–40 years (clad)

Match to original profile	Yes — we mill to the existing muntin profile	Standard factory profile only
What the homeowner keeps	The original window, working, weatherstripped	A new factory product

05 • QUALITY CONTROL & WARRANTY

Apex backs every wood window repair with a 5-year workmanship warranty. The warranty is what it is because the process behind it is consistent.

What our quality control includes

- **Per-window photo log.** Every sash is photographed before, during, and after work. Stored with the customer file.
- **Material lot tracking.** Putty, primer, and topcoat lot numbers are recorded on each job — if a material defect surfaces later, we can trace it.
- **Two-stage inspection.** Lead technician checks the work after re-glazing; foreman checks again before reassembly.
- **Movement test on reassembly.** Every sash is opened, closed, and locked twice before the job is called done.
- **Customer walk-through.** Homeowner is shown the finished work and signs off on each window.

WHAT THE 5-YEAR WARRANTY COVERS

Any failure of the work we performed — failed glazing, broken sash cord we installed, weatherstripping that has come loose, paint that has not adhered to a substrate we prepared. We will return to the home and correct it at no charge.

Not covered: pre-existing conditions we did not repair, damage from impact, sashes that were not part of the scope of work, or weather events.

PART 2

What to Expect from an Apex Visit

From the first phone call to the final walk-through — what happens, how long it takes, and what we will ask of you.

06 • THE FIRST CALL

When you call (847) 557-9600, you reach our office in Wheeling — not a call center. The first conversation usually takes 5 to 10 minutes. Here is what we will ask, and what you can expect us to tell you.

What we will ask

- **Address of the property.** We service Chicago, Wheeling, the surrounding suburbs, parts of southern Wisconsin, the Twin Cities area in Minnesota, and the Cleveland area in Ohio.
- **Approximate year the home was built.** Pre-1978 homes follow EPA lead-safe procedures.
- **How many windows are involved and what is wrong with them.** A rough count and short description is enough.
- **Whether the home is in a historic district.** Oak Park, parts of Chicago, Evanston, and others may require review.
- **Your availability for an estimate visit.** We typically schedule within 5–10 business days.

What we will tell you on the call

- Whether your project sounds like restoration or replacement.
- Whether there are obvious red flags (e.g. a non-original 1990s vinyl insert).
- A very rough order-of-magnitude price range based on the description.
- When we can do an in-home estimate.

WE WILL NOT QUOTE A FIRM PRICE OVER THE PHONE

Anyone who quotes a firm price on a wood window without seeing it is guessing. We will give you a range — but the real number comes after we look at the actual sashes.

07 • THE IN-HOME ESTIMATE VISIT

The in-home estimate is free and takes 45 minutes to 2 hours depending on how many windows are involved. One Apex estimator comes — not a sales team. You will not be presented with a tablet, a financing pitch, or a "today-only" discount. We do not do that.

Stage	What happens	Duration
Arrival	Estimator arrives in a marked vehicle, introduces themselves, and confirms the scope of the visit. We will leave shoes at the door if you would like us to.	5 min
Whole-house walk	We walk through every room together, looking at every window. You point out which ones concern you; we note conditions you may not have noticed.	15–30 min

Sash check	On at least one window per room, we will gently pull the interior stop and look into the jamb pocket to confirm whether the window is original.	10–20 min
Condition photos	We photograph anything we will be writing up. Photos go into your customer file and are shared with the technician who does the work.	10–15 min
Scope discussion	We sit down at your kitchen table or wherever you prefer. We walk through what we found, window by window, and explain what each repair would involve.	15–30 min
Questions	We answer questions about the process, materials, timeline, payment, warranty, and anything else. There is no pitch — only information.	As long as needed

08 • THE WRITTEN ESTIMATE

You receive a written estimate by email within 2 business days of the visit. Often the same day. It is broken down so you can see exactly what you are paying for and choose to scope-out anything you do not need.

What the written estimate includes

- **Window-by-window line items.** Each window listed with its location and the work it needs.
- **Process stages on each window.** Re-glaze / re-cord / Dutchman / weatherstrip — itemized so you can see which stages apply.
- **Material specifications.** What we will use (Sarco putty, bronze weatherstripping, etc.).
- **Approximate timeline.** How long the work will take from start to finish.
- **5-year workmanship warranty terms.** Written into the estimate, not added later.
- **Payment schedule.** Deposit, milestone, and final payment terms.

What it does NOT include

- Hidden charges or "if-we-find" clauses. If we find unexpected damage mid-job, we stop and call you before doing anything not in the scope.
- Time-pressure language. The estimate does not expire in 24 hours.
- Financing offers. We can connect you to financing partners if you ask, but we do not lead with it.

09 • THE WORK ITSELF

Most wood window restoration work happens partly in your home and partly in our Wheeling shop. Here is how the days are typically structured.

Day	What happens at your home

Day 1 (morning)	Crew arrives between 8:00 and 9:00 am. Drop cloths laid. Containment plastic set up if the home was built before 1978. Sashes carefully removed and tagged by location.
Day 1 (afternoon)	Sashes leave for our shop in a labeled crate. Each window opening is sealed with weatherproof poly or temporary sash inserts so the home stays secure and weathertight.
Days 2–5 (typical)	Sash restoration happens in the Apex shop: stripping, epoxy, glazing, paint cure time. You do not need to be home, and no one is at your house during this stage.
Return day	Crew returns. Sashes go back into their original openings. Weatherstripping installed. Hardware re-set. Each sash tested for movement and lock.
Final walk-through	We walk the home with you, window by window. You sign off on each one. We hand you the warranty document and the photo log.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Move furniture away from the windows we are working on (we will help if you ask). Plan to be home for the first morning and the final walk-through. The middle days are us, not you.

10 • DROP-OFF vs. IN-HOME WORK

Some windows we restore entirely at your home. Some leave for our shop. The choice depends on the work, the season, and what is easier for you.

Option	Best when	How it works
Sashes drop off at shop	Multiple windows, full restoration, or anything involving lead paint	We remove sashes, transport them to Wheeling, do the work, and bring them back. Openings are sealed in the meantime.
In-home work	1–2 windows, light scope (re-cord, weatherstrip, re-glaze in place)	We work on-site, usually one window per crew per day. No transport, no opening to seal.
Hybrid	Some windows need shop work, others are quick fixes	Heavy sashes go to the shop; light fixes happen on the same visit. Common on full-house projects.

11 • PAYMENT, WARRANTY & WHAT HAPPENS AFTER

Payment schedule

- **Deposit:** 30% on contract signing — this is what schedules your work and orders any materials specific to your project.
- **Milestone:** 40% when sashes return to your home, before final installation.
- **Final:** 30% on completion, after the walk-through.
- **Accepted methods:** Check, ACH, all major credit cards. Financing is available through partner lenders if you ask.

Warranty

- 5-year workmanship warranty on every wood window we repair.
- Includes failed glazing, sash cord we installed, weatherstripping we installed, paint adhesion on substrates we prepared.
- Does not include: pre-existing conditions we did not repair, damage from impact, sashes that were not part of the scope, or weather events.
- Lifetime warranty on certain conditions if the original homeowner stays in the home (small repairs covered every 5 years to keep the work in service).

After the job

- You receive a photo log of all completed windows.
- You receive a maintenance reference: what to do annually, every 3 years, every 5 years.
- If anything fails inside the warranty window, you call (847) 557-9600. We come back and correct it.

PART 3

Cost & Scope Reference

Indicative Chicagoland pricing for typical repairs, full-restoration tiers, and how to read an Apex quote against a replacement-only quote.

12 • HOW APEX PRICES WOOD WINDOW REPAIR

Wood window repair is priced by the scope of work on each window, not by the window itself. Two windows in the same house often need very different work — one might need only a new sash cord, the next might need a full restoration. We price them separately.

What affects the price of a wood window repair

- **How much of the original window is failing.** A sash cord is $4 in materials; a Dutchman splice involves milling matching old-growth pine.
- **Size and type of sash.** A tall greystone double-hung weighs more, takes longer, and uses sash chain instead of cord.
- **Whether the home was built before 1978.** Lead-safe procedures add containment time and disposal cost.
- **Whether the home is in a historic district.** Permitting and review timelines can add days.
- **Whether sashes go to the shop or stay on-site.** Shop work is usually less expensive per window because the workflow is faster.
- **Access.** A second-floor window on a steep roof costs more than a first-floor window on level ground.

HOW TO READ THE RANGES BELOW

Every range covers Chicagoland projects from 2025–2026. The low end is typical for a small, ground-floor window in good underlying condition. The high end is typical for a large second-floor sash with multiple repairs stacked together. Your actual price depends on what we find on site.

13 • SINGLE-WINDOW REPAIR PRICING

The following are the most common repairs we are called for. Prices are per window unless noted otherwise.

Problem	What we do	Typical price
Won't stay up (broken sash cord)	Re-cord both sides, service pulleys, balance test	**$150 – $350**
Painted shut or stuck	Score, free, re-set parting bead, weatherstrip	**$180 – $400**
Cracked or missing glazing putty	Remove sash, strip old putty, re-glaze with linseed putty, paint	**$250 – $500**
Broken glass (single pane)	Cut and install new glass, re-glaze with linseed putty	**$200 – $500**
Foggy IGU (sealed insulated unit failed)	Replace IGU only; keep original sash and frame	**$280 – $650**

Drafty around sash	Install interlocking bronze or spring-bronze weatherstripping	**$200 – $450**
Rotted bottom rail (Dutchman repair)	Splice in matching old-growth pine, re-glaze, prime, paint	**$450 – $800**
Rotted sill (epoxy or Dutchman)	Consolidate or splice sill, re-prime, paint	**$350 – $750**
Frame rot at jamb	Epoxy consolidation or matched in-kind replacement of section	**$400 – $900**
Hardware repair or replacement	Clean and re-set original; replace with matching bronze if needed	**$80 – $250**
Stained / leaded glass re-lead	Remove panel, re-lead in shop, reset in sash	**$400 – $1,200**

14 • FULL RESTORATION PRICING

A full restoration combines several of the repairs above into a single scope on each sash. It is what we recommend when a window has multiple issues stacked together, or when a homeowner wants the window to be in service for another 50+ years.

Scope	Typical price	Service life of result
Light restoration (re-cord + re-glaze + weatherstrip)	**$550 – $850**	30–50 years
Standard restoration (sash + glazing + balance + finish)	**$850 – $1,400**	50+ years
Full restoration with Dutchman repair (rot present)	**$1,200 – $1,800**	50–80 years
Full restoration of art-glass / leaded sash	**$1,400 – $2,500**	60+ years
Reproduction sash where original is unrecoverable	**$1,500 – $2,800**	60+ years on new sash

FULL-HOUSE BUDGETING RULE OF THUMB

A typical Chicago bungalow has 12–18 wood windows. A typical Chicago greystone has 16–24. If most of the windows are in similar condition, multiplying the standard restoration midpoint by the window count gets you a usable budget range. For a bungalow with 14 windows at $1,100/window, that is about $15,400 — usable for planning, not a quote.

15 • WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Every price in this document includes the following standard items. We do not break them out as add-ons. If they appear as separate line items on a competitor's quote, that is something to question.

- All labor — removal, transport, shop work, reinstallation.
- All materials specified by name — linseed putty, primer, paint, weatherstripping, sash cord.
- Lead-safe containment and disposal on pre-1978 homes (EPA RRP).
- Photo log of work performed on each window.
- 5-year workmanship warranty.
- Final walk-through with the homeowner.

What is NOT included by default

- Interior repaint of trim or walls (we paint sashes, frames, and putty bevels — not the room).
- Replacement of associated exterior trim, brickmould, or capping (separate scope; we can do it, it gets its own line).
- Storm window fabrication or installation (we can spec storms, but they are quoted separately).
- Replacement of factory replacement units already in the openings (different category of work).
- Custom historic-replication work beyond like-for-like profile matching (priced case-by-case).

16 • COMPARING YOUR APEX QUOTE TO OTHERS

It is good practice to get two or three quotes for any wood window project. The trick is comparing them on the same basis — quotes from a restoration company and a replacement company are not the same product.

What to compare	Apex restoration	Replacement-only quote
Unit being priced	Repair of each original sash	New factory window installed
Materials line items	Putty, primer, weatherstripping, cord, etc.	Window unit + installation labor
Service life of the result	50–80 years on a restored sash	20–25 years (vinyl) / 30–40 (clad)
What you keep when it is done	The original window, working	A new factory product
EPA lead-safe procedures	Included on pre-1978 homes	Should be included; ask if listed
Art-glass / leaded transom handling	Preserved, restored if needed	Often discarded with the old sash

Warranty	5 years workmanship	Varies by manufacturer; 10–20 years on the unit, less on the install

17 • PRICING QUESTIONS WE GET ASKED

Why is restoration in the same price range as replacement?

Per window, it often is. Restoration is labor-heavy; replacement is materials-heavy. The economics shift sharply over time: a restored window lasts 50–80 years, a vinyl replacement 20–25. Across one ownership cycle of a pre-war home, restoration is almost always cheaper.

Do you offer volume discounts on full-house projects?

Yes. When we restore 10 or more windows in a single visit, per-window pricing improves because the setup, containment, and trip costs spread across more work.

What does a Dutchman repair cost vs. replacing the sash entirely?

A Dutchman repair is typically 30–50% of the cost of milling a new sash. We use Dutchman wherever there is enough sound material to repair to.

How firm are your prices once the estimate is signed?

Firm. The only exceptions are if we discover hidden conditions during work. In that case we stop, photograph what we found, call you, and get approval before any additional work.

Do you accept financing?

Yes — through partner lenders. We do not push it during the estimate; if you want it, ask. Most homeowners pay in three milestones (deposit / mid-job / completion) without financing.

READY TO START?

You now have the same information we would give you on a phone call — how we work, what to expect, and what it costs. The next step is a free in-home estimate. We will walk the house with you, look at every window, and give you a scope of work in writing.

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE ESTIMATE

Hire the window repair company you can trust.

SCHEDULE ESTIMATE **OR CALL (847) 557-9600**

BUSINESS HOURS

Weekdays
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Saturdays
9:00 am – 2:00 pm

CONTACT

Phone: (847) 557-9600

Address:
111 E Marquardt Dr, Wheeling, IL 60090

Web: apexwindowwerks.com