



ROOF ACCESS

Minneapolis Department of Inspections
Department Policy Concerning Section 306.5
Of Minnesota Mechanical Code
Revised January 2009

Department Policy

When mechanical equipment or appliances are installed on roofs or elevated structures, a permanent stair shall be provided for access.

Exceptions: For dwelling units and existing buildings less than 16 feet height, the building is exempt from a permanent stair requirement, unless the building official determines that the unique shape of the roof does not allow safe access with a portable ladder.

- The stair shall be installed at an angle not more than 60 degrees.
- The stair shall have treads at least 6" deep, at least 18" wide, with risers at least 10 ½" to 14" high equally spaced.
- The stair shall have intermediate landings not exceeding 18' vertically.
- Continuous handrails shall be installed on both sides of the stair.
- When a roof hatch or mechanical equipment is located within 10 feet of a roof edge, a guard rail shall be installed in accordance with IMC Section 304.9.
- Permanent ladders. Where a change in roof elevation greater than 30 inches (762 mm) but not exceeding 16 feet (4.9 m) exists, a permanent ladder shall be provided. The ladder may be vertical and shall be as required by relevant safety regulations, but shall not be less than the following:
 1. Width shall be at least 16 inches (406 mm).
 2. Rung spacing shall be a maximum of 14 inches (356 mm).
 3. Toe space shall be at least 6 inches (152 mm).
 4. Side railings shall extend at least 30 inches (762 mm) above the roof or parapet wall.
- Sloped roofs. Where appliances are installed on a roof having a slope of 3 units vertical in 12 units horizontal (25 percent slope) or greater and having an edge more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at such edge, a level platform shall be provided on each side of the appliance to which access is required by the manufacturer's installation instructions for service, repair or maintenance. The platform shall not be less than 20 inches (762 mm) in any dimension and shall be provided with guards in accordance with Section 304.9

Any variance to this policy must be approved by the Director of Inspections. Applications must be made in writing stating the reasons for a variance to the roof access requirement.