

**NC Department of Insurance
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division
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Means of Egress from Industrial Equipment Platforms

Code: 2012 Building Code
Sections: 505.5

Date: September 1, 2011

Question:

What are the guidelines for means of egress from normally unoccupied electrical and/or mechanical platforms?

Answer:

An electrical and/or mechanical platform will not be considered either a floor or a mezzanine(for exit purposes) provided:

- 1) either there is no permanent access to the space,
- 2) or access is limited to authorized personnel only (placarded as appropriate) and :
 - a. The space is limited to electrical and/or mechanical equipment only.
 - b. Access may be a stair (Section 1009) or a ladder (ANSI A14.3: Ladders-Fixed-Safety Requirements; ANSI A1264.1: Safety Requirements for Workplace Floor & Wall Openings, Stairs and Railing Systems; OSH Section 1910.27: Fixed Ladders).
 - c. Section 1014.3, exception #2 limits the common path of travel to 100 feet. If travel distance to a single access exceeds 100 feet, then a second means of escape shall be provided.
 - d. A secondary means of escape may be a stair, ladder or alternating tread device.

These guidelines are prepared in response to questions about means of egress from mechanical "attic" spaces in schools. These spaces need not be required to have mezzanine exit stairs provided access is by authorized personnel only for service of utilities.

Keywords:

exit