

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
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**Roof Access Opening for 3-Story or Less Building**

**Code:** 2018 Building Code

**Date:** September 12, 2018

**Section:** 1011.12.2

**Question:**

If a roof access opening is provided for a 3-story or less building, is the opening required to comply with Section 1011.12.2 which requires a 16 square foot opening?

**Answer:**

The minimum size must comply with Section 306.3 of the NC Mechanical Code. Section 306.3 indicates that the opening must be 20"x30" or large enough for the largest mechanical equipment to pass through, whichever is larger. If no mechanical equipment is located on the roof, or the mechanical equipment that will not pass thru a 20"x30" opening will be removed and/or installed using an exterior lift system (either permanent or portable), then the opening can be 20"x30".

**Keywords:**

Stair, ladder, hatch