

MSAD 75
Safety Guidelines
Roof Hatches

Rev. 0; January 28, 2009

Background:

Various flat topped roofs in the District have Roof Hatches to facilitate Maintenance. When a hatch is left in the open position, personnel working on a roof can be exposed to a potential fall hazard. Workers can fall into the opened hatch and sustain severe or deadly injuries by losing their footing, tripping or stepping backwards without looking.

Requirement:

OSHA Standard 26 CFR 1910.23; “Guarding Floor and Wall Openings and Holes” requires that safety provisions be put in place to prevent a person from falling through a hatch opening. There are several means of complying with this standard including engineered and administrative approaches.

Compliance:

Installing Permanent guard rails or fall nets around each hatch is an option however significant modifications and custom fitting at each hatch would be necessary based on the various designs and vintages of our facilities. A more practical and equally compliant approach would entail the following administrative approach to ensure worker safety.

Any time work needs to be done on a roof where access is obtained through a roof hatch the worker is **required** to ensure the following approved method is utilized:

1) Verify the roof hatch can be closed and NOT become automatically latched (i.e. locked). Take any portable locking device (pad lock or bolt/nut) with you on to the roof.

If it does automatically lock ensure someone else knows you are on the roof and can reopen the hatch from the inside when you are done or ensure you have a cell phone that you can use to call someone to come and open the hatch when you are done.

2) Immediately upon stepping on to the roof after passing through the hatch CLOSE the hatch.

3) Upon completing your work reclose the hatch while exiting the area taking extra care if it's windy and while securing the locking device (pad lock or bolt).

Accessing the roof with an extension ladder is an acceptable alternative however; all ladder safety guidelines and requirements must be adhered to.