



BOBBY JINDAL  
GOVERNOR

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

### Public Safety Services



H. BUTCH BROWNING  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

#### INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2009-06

To: LA Licensed Architects  
LA Licensed Engineers  
Chief Dan Wallis, Deputy Asst Fire Marshal Enforcement/Emergency Services  
Felicia Cooper, Deputy Asst Secretary/Plan Review  
Stephen Gogreve, Manager  
Pat Aronstein, Manager  
Plan Review Staff

From: Don Zeringue, Chief Architect/Plan Review

Approved by: Chief Butch Browning, State Fire Marshal

Date: October 1, 2009

#### RE: FOLDING (DISAPPEARING) ATTIC ACCESS LADDERS

This memorandum is intended to address the acceptable use of folding (disappearing) attic access ladders in commercial buildings. Acceptable means of egress components are prescribed by NFPA 101 for the various occupancy classifications. This office recognizes that there is a need for restricted access to unoccupied attics of buildings for various maintenance reasons.

This office considers that such maintenance falls in the category of INDUSTRIAL operations and although the actual conditions vary slightly from building to building, NFPA 101:40.2.1.2 addresses normally unoccupied utility chases that are secured from unauthorized access and are used exclusively for routing of electrical, mechanical, or plumbing equipment.

Folding (disappearing) attic access ladders shall be deemed acceptable means of egress components for single-story occupancies under the following conditions:

1. The ladder shall be designed for commercial or industrial grade applications and NOT strictly for residential use.
2. The ladder shall be secured from unauthorized access and the attic shall NOT be accessed or used for any purpose other than exclusively for periodic building related maintenance.
3. The common path of travel from within the attic space shall not exceed fifty (50') feet, unless the building is protected throughout by an approved, automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with NFPA 13.
4. The ladder shall be listed / labeled for the intended application, if located in a fire rated assembly.
5. The OWNER of the building shall provide a written document to this office with a copy of this memorandum acknowledging the terms presented and assuming responsibility for maintaining these conditions.

DZ/FLF

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Smoke Detectors Save Lives!!  
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