





Clarification and Guidelines of Fire  
Department Policy Regarding Filing a  
Variance for Rooftop Access as  
Delineated in the NYC Fire Code  
Section 504.

# FDNY Apparatus



- Engine Companies– Carry hose and is used primarily for fire extinguishment.
- Ladders Companies- Carry an assortment of ladders and tools primarily used for search and rescue.

# Roof of the Fire Building



- NOTHING SHALL DETER THE MEMBER ASSIGNED THE ROOF POSITION FROM CARRYING OUT THE ASSIGNED DUTIES.

# Roof Position



- Responsibility of this position covers three broad areas; life, communication, and ventilation.
  - A perimeter search shall include the sides, rear and shafts of the building.
  - Transmitting vital information to the Incident Commander.
  - Roof ventilation is critical for search, rescue and extinguishment of the fire.

# Venting for Life



## VERTICAL VENTILATION

- This type of ventilation entails opening the bulkhead door and or roof scuttle and skylights.
  - A. Relieves the upper portions of the building of heat, smoke and gases, limiting horizontal spread.
  - B. Permits a more thorough search and examination above the fire.
  - C. Relieves public hall and stairs of smoke and heat aiding the escape of occupants and facilitating an aggressive interior fire attack.

# Ladder Placement



- When an aerial ladder has been committed to a roof position it usually left in place
- This provides egress for a member who may have considered it as an alternate escape route.
- Conditions on the roof often change without warning, cutting off the initial access point.



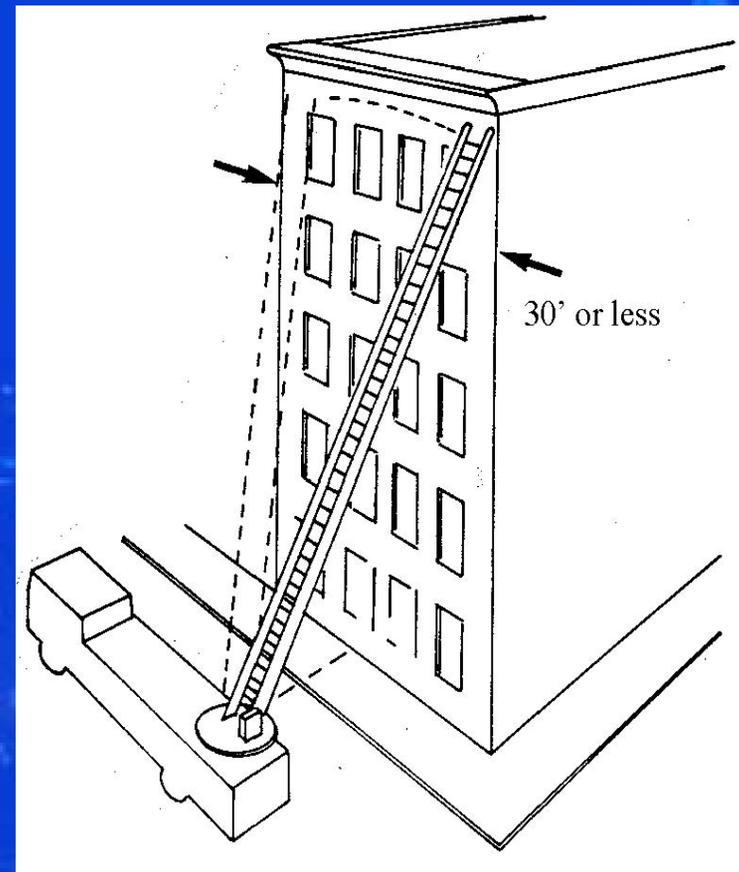
# Roof Hazards

- Open shafts
- Low or no parapet wall
- Soil pipes
- TV and radio antennas
- Clotheslines
- Sloping roofs/cornices
- Razor wire/barbed wire
- Fencing
- Membrane roof coverings
- Dogs
- High bulkheads
- Penthouse structures
- Walk Through Bulkhead
- Roof level skylights covered with substandard material
- High cornices making access from aerial ladder dangerous
- High free standing walls around perimeter of building
- Increased difficulties caused by rain, snow and ice.

# Aerial Ladder Positioning



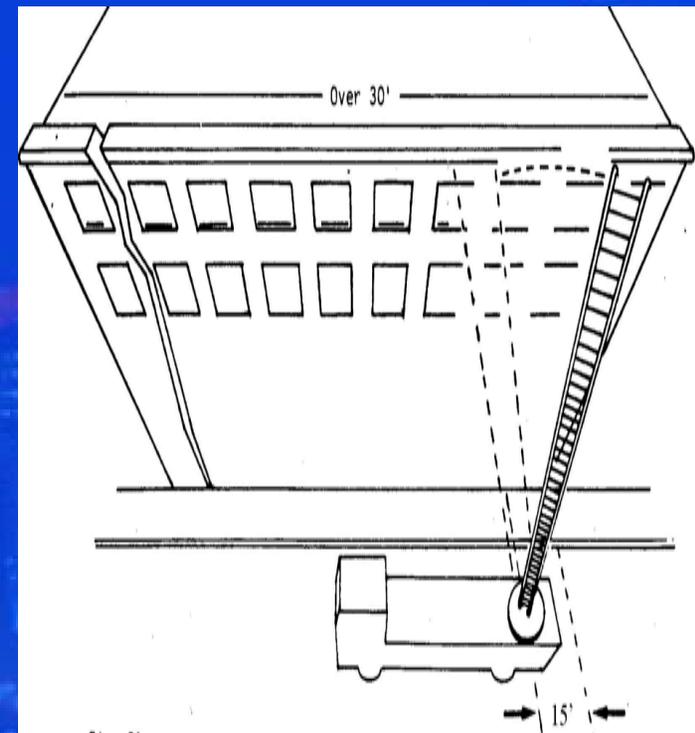
- Narrow Frontage Building (30' or less in width).
- Position the turntable in the center of the building.



# Aerial Ladder Positioning



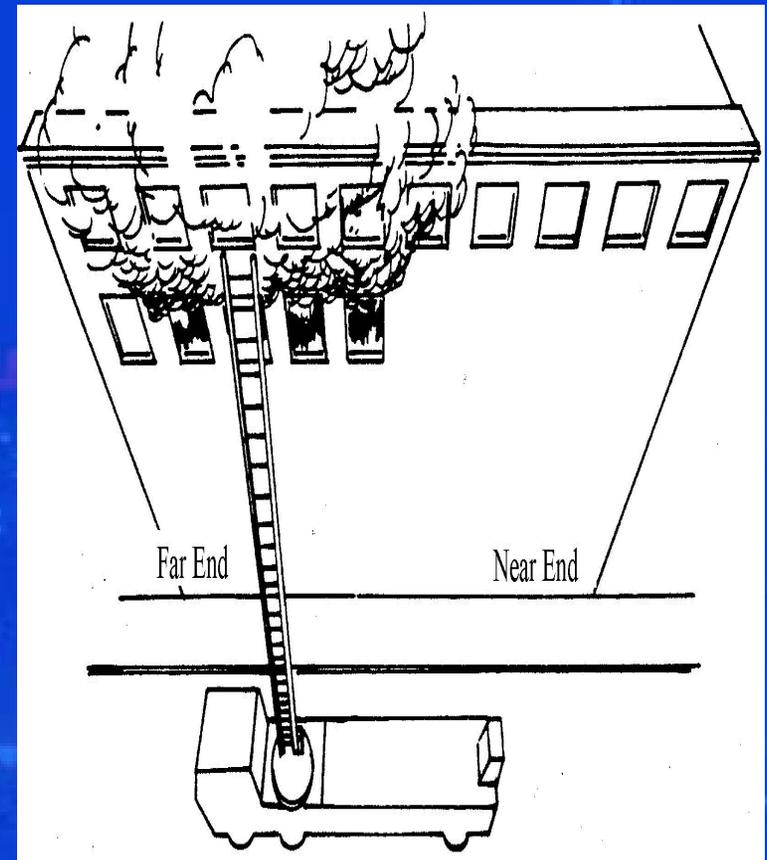
- Large Frontage Building (over 30')
- If no condition exists in front of building, place the center of the turntable approximately 15' from the side wall passed on your approach.



# Aerial Ladder Positioning



- For fires covering an extensive floor area our options for Ladder placement become limited.



Please refer to the following reference material when determining Fire Code Compliance and preparing drawings.

- **Fire Code – Section FC504.** in the NYC Fire Code, specifically regarding rooftop access and clear path.
- **Fire Code – Frequently Asked Questions:** posted on the Fire Department's web site in response to many of the industry's questions.
- **Office of Technology Management Draft Bulletin.** This is a guidance document for the convenience of the public. It does not substitute for any applicable laws, rules or regulations.

# Narrative



The narration should include:

- General scope of work
- BIN number, block and lot,
- Explanation of what equipment is existing and all equipment that is proposed.
- Address all equipment that is in compliance and all that is not in compliance.
- The areas that are not in compliance are to be explained as to why they are not, indicate in feet the actual widths of all access paths, landing areas, door clearance and fire escape rooftop ladder points.

# Legend



A LEGEND TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS;

1. UNOBSTRUCTED ROOFTOP ACCESS



1

2. ROOFTOP DOOR OPENING CLEARANCE



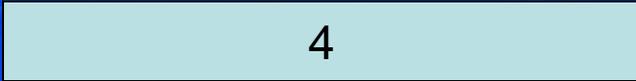
2

3. 3' FIRE ESCAPE CLEARANCE



3

4. 6' FOOT WIDE CLEAR PATH



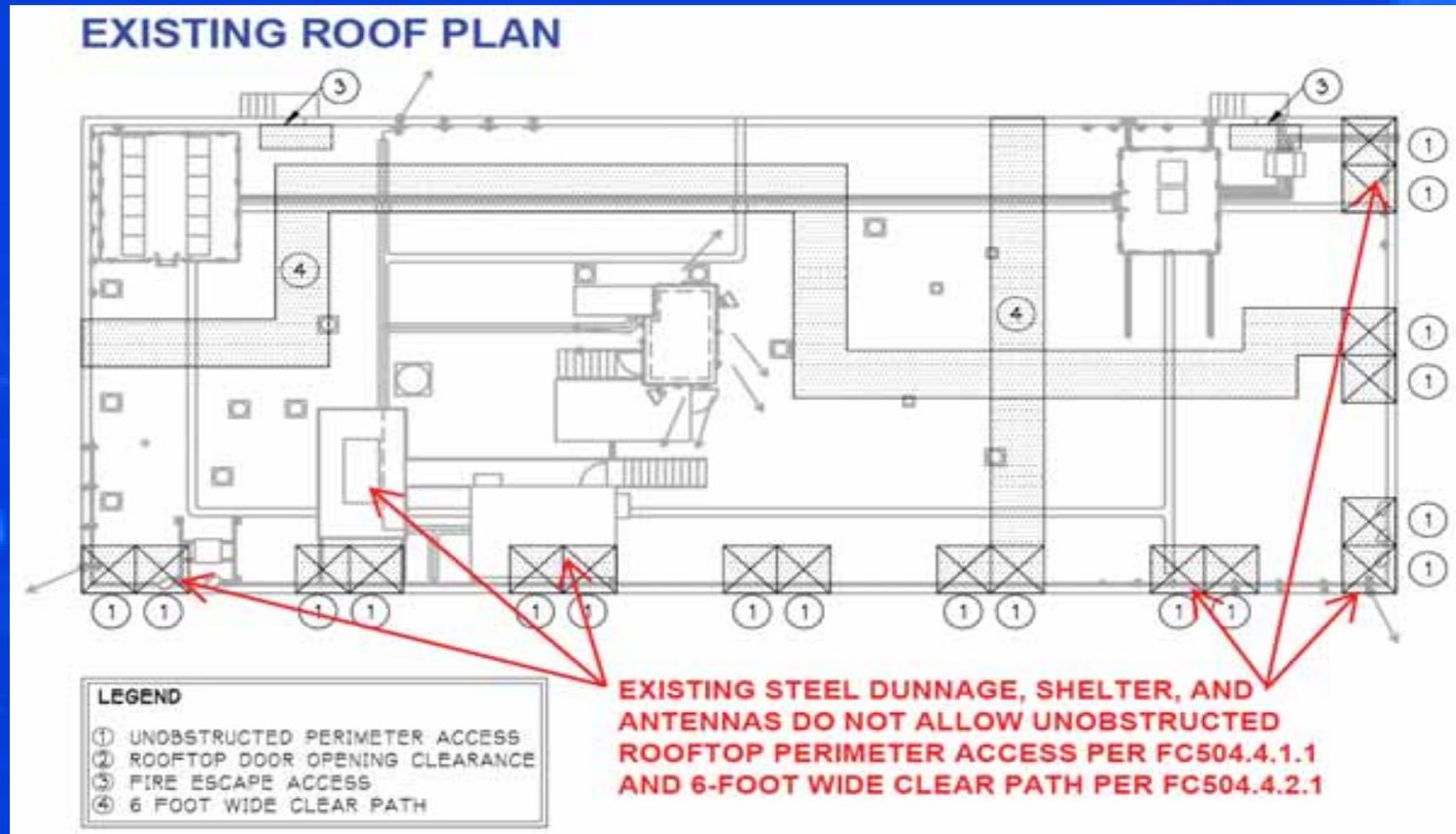
4

# Diagrams



- Provide two 11" x 17" drawings to include an overhead (looking down) of the roof
- An elevation of the whole building
- A legend & a site/plot plan with a north indicator.
- The site/plot plan is to indicate the location of the building in relation to adjoining structures.
- All sides of building which are accessible by Fire Department apparatus, dimensions of open and obstructed areas should be noted.
- Include photos of the rooftop

The first Diagram should identify all required unobstructed access points and clear paths as per Section FC504, while identifying any components which are not compliant





## References



- Fire Code – Section FC504
  - [www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/firecode/index.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/firecode/index.shtml)  
**or** <http://bit.ly/bpVFKD>
- Fire Code – Frequently Asked Questions
  - [www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/firecode/faq.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/firecode/faq.shtml) **or**  
<http://bit.ly/a5FtjQ>
- Office of Technology Management Draft Bulletin.
- Application for a Variance to Fire Code FC504
  - [www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/fire\\_prevention/modification\\_variances.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/fire_prevention/modification_variances.pdf) **or** <http://bit.ly/cRLNjp>

