

## Chapter Comm 75

### DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

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**Note:** Chapter Ind 160 was renumbered chapter ILHR 75 under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 1., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474; chapter ILHR 75 was renumbered chapter Comm 75 under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 1., Stats., Register, May, 1998, No. 509.

**Note:** The word "department" referred to in chs. Comm 75 to 79 means the department of commerce.

**Note:** The Wisconsin state codes (building code; heating, ventilating and air conditioning code; and electrical code) referred to in these rules means the codes for the year 1956.

#### Comm 75.001 Buildings affected by these orders.

(1) These orders shall apply to all buildings and structures erected prior to the effective date of the first building code (October 9, 1914) except:

- (a) Private residences, and outbuildings in connection therewith such as barns, garages, etc.
- (b) Flat buildings used as the residence of 2 families only, provided not more than 2 persons are accommodated who are not members of the family.
- (c) Buildings used for agricultural purposes which are not within the corporate limits of a city or village.
- (d) Temporary buildings or sheds used for construction purposes only.
- (e) Qualified historic buildings for which the owner has elected to use ch. Comm 70. Those buildings are not required to comply with any of the provisions of these orders that are addressed by ch. Comm 70.

**Note:** The owner of a qualified historic building may select which code will apply to the building. The options include (1) complying with ch. Comm 70 - Historic Buildings Code; (2) complying with chs. Comm 61 to 65 - Wisconsin Commercial Building Code; (3) complying with the commercial building code that was in effect at the time of the last approved addition, alteration, or change in use, provided the building and use have remained unchanged since then; or (4) complying with these orders, provided the building was constructed prior to October 9, 1914, and continues to have the same use as on that date.

(2) Provided, however, that if any building or structure, whether above exempted or not, is especially liable to fire, and is so situated as to endanger other buildings or property; or contains any combustible or explosive material dangerous to the safety of any building or premises or the occupants thereof, or endangering or hindering firefighters in case of fire; then such building or structure shall be subject to these orders so far as may be necessary to protect adjoining or other buildings and their occupants, and firefighters.

(3) Provided further, that in the case of buildings which are subject to the requirements of the state building code, the requirements of the building code shall govern.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections in (2) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 5., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474; cr. (1) (e), Register, September, 2000, No. 537, eff. 10-1-00.

**Comm 75.01 Local regulations.** These orders shall not be understood to limit the power of cities, villages and towns to make or enforce additional or more stringent regulations, provided the same do not conflict with these orders, or with any other order of the department.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.02 Fire-resistive construction.** A building is of fire-resistive construction if all the walls, partitions, piers, columns, floors, ceilings, roof and stairs are built of incombustible material, except as hereinafter provided, and if all metallic structural members are protected by an incombustible fire-resistive covering.

**Note:** See s. Ind 51.001, 1956 for detailed requirements for fire-resistive construction.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.03 Mill construction.** A building is of mill construction if all walls are of 4-hour fire-resistive construction as specified in s. Ind 51.01, 1956; all wood girders and joists are at least 5 1/2 inches thick; wood columns and posts are at least 7 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches; floors are at least 3 inches thick; the roof has an incombustible roof covering, and there are no concealed air spaces except such as are enclosed by incombustible material.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 4. and 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.04 Ordinary construction.** A building is of ordinary construction if all walls consist of incombustible material, the roof has a fire-retardant covering, but other requirements for fire-resistive or mill construction are not complied with.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.05 Frame construction.** A building is of frame construction if the structural parts and enclosing walls consist of wood. If such enclosing walls are veneered, encased or

faced with stone, brick, tile, concrete, plaster, or metal, whose stability or rigidity depends upon the frame wall, the building is also termed a frame building.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.06 Basement; first floor; number of stories.** A basement is a story whose floor line is below the grade at any entrance or exit and whose ceiling is not more than 5 feet above such grade. The first floor is the floor next above the basement, or the lowest floor if there is no basement. The number of stories of a building includes all stories except the basement.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.07 Fire retardant roof covering.** A roof covering is considered fire retardant if made of 3 thicknesses of roofing felt with tar and gravel or asphalt or if made of tin, corrugated iron, galvanized iron, or other approved fire-resistive material.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.08 Fire-resistive enclosure or partition.** A fire-resistive enclosure or partition shall be of 4-hour, 3-hour, 2-hour, or one-hour construction as may be required by this code under occupancy requirements and as described in s. Ind 51.05, 1956.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 4. and 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.09 Fire-resistive door.** A fire-resistive door shall consist of a wooden core not less than 1½ inches thick encased with metal using locked seam joints, or shall be entirely of metal and of a design approved by the department. The door frame shall be of metal or shall be metal covered. The door shall close automatically in case of fire.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.10 Fire-resistive window.** A fire-resistive window shall have a metal frame, metal sash and wired glass, of a design approved by the department. No pane shall be less than ¼ inch thick nor of greater area than 720 square inches. The window shall be fixed or shall close automatically in case of fire.

**Note:** It will be the policy of the department to approve, subject to the provisions of this order, any window bearing the inspection manifest of the Underwriters' Laboratories for the situation of the installation.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.11 One-hour fire-resistive ceiling.** A one-hour fire-resistive ceiling shall be constructed of not less than 1⅝ inch joists, spaced not more than 16 inches center to center, protected on the under side by metal or wire lath and ¾ inch of gypsum or Portland cement plaster or by ⅜ inch perforated gypsum lath and ½ inch of gypsum plaster, the joints of the lath to be reinforced with 3 inch wide strips of metal lath. Other materials and methods of construction having an equivalent fire-resistive rating may be used if approved by the department, as specified under s. Ind 50.12, 1956.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 4. and 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.12 Horizontal exit.** (1) A horizontal exit is either:

(a) An opening through a fire-resistive wall or partition, (s. Comm 75.08) which separates 2 buildings or 2 divisions of a building; every such opening shall be protected by a fire-resistive door on each side of the wall; or,

(b) An exterior balcony or bridge which connects 2 buildings or 2 divisions of a building. Every such balcony or bridge, including its railings, its supporting brackets or beams, and the exits thereto, shall be constructed the same as specified for fire escapes, (ss. Comm 75.14 to 75.22); but a bridge may be built of wood if it is enclosed by walls and a roof and if it is separated from each

building by a fire-resistive door. The floor shall not have a slope of more than one foot in 5.

(2) If a horizontal exit takes the place of an "A" type standard fire escape, it shall be at least 2 feet 4 inches wide; if it takes the place of a "B" type standard fire escape, it shall be at least 3 feet 4 inches wide.

(3) The floor on each side of a horizontal exit shall contain at least one stairway and all passageways leading thereto shall be kept clear and unobstructed at all times.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.13 Fire escapes; location.** Every fire escape shall be so located as to lead directly to a street, alley, or open court connected with the street. Every fire escape shall be placed against a blank wall if possible.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.14 Exits to fire escapes.** Every fire escape shall be accessible from a public passageway or shall be directly accessible from each occupied room. Each exit to a "B" type fire escape shall be a standard exit door (s. Comm 75.24) at least 3 feet 4 inches in width, and the door sill shall be flush with the floor inside. Each exit to an "A" type fire escape shall be a standard exit door at least 2 feet 6 inches in width and the door sill shall be not more than 8 inches above the inside floor level, unless a stair leads from the floor to the sill, or windows may be used in place of such door if approved by the department.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.15 Material and strength.** (1) No other material than wrought iron or soft or medium steel shall be used for any part of a fire escape except for weights, separators, and ornaments.

(2) No bar material less than ¼ inch thick shall be used in the construction of any fire escape, except for separators, ornaments, structural shapes over 3 inches and rigidly built up treads and platforms of approved design. All bolts and rivets, except for ornamental work, shall be not less than ⅜ inch in diameter.

(3) Each part of every fire escape (except counterweights for balanced stairways) shall be designed and constructed to carry a live load of 100 pounds per square foot of horizontal area over the entire fire escape. The minimum sections and sizes specified below shall be increased whenever necessary so that under full load the unit stresses will not exceed ¾ of the allowable unit stresses specified in s. Ind 53.24, 1956.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.16 Platforms.** (1) Each platform of an "A" type fire escape shall be at least 28 inches wide; each platform of a "B" type fire escape shall be at least 3 feet 4 inches wide. Such widths shall be the clear distance between stringers, measuring at the narrowest point. Each platform shall extend at least 4 inches beyond the jams of exit openings. The above minimum widths and lengths shall be increased wherever necessary, so that no exit door or window will, when open, block any part of the required width of the fire escape.

(2) Every platform shall consist of either:

(a) Flat bars on edge, not less than 1 × ¼ inch; but not less than 1 ¼ × ¼ inch where bolts and separators are used; bars shall be not more than 1 ¼ inches center to center.

(b) ½ inch or ⅝ inch square bars with sharp edge up, more than 1 ½ inches center to center.

(c) ⅝ inch round bars, not more than 1 ½ inches center to center.

(3) Platform and treads may be solid if covered by a roof.

(4) The platform frame shall consist of not less than  $2 \times \frac{3}{8}$  inch flat bars on edge or equivalent, provided the brackets are not more than 4 feet apart. If brackets are more than 4 feet apart, the frame shall be correspondingly stronger and stiffer. Every platform wider than 30 inches, if made of square or round bars, shall have a third frame bar through the center; if made of flat bars, the platform shall have separators and bolts through the center. Frame bars shall not project more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch above platform bars, except around the outside of platform.

(5) There shall be a platform at each story above the first and intermediate platforms if floors are more than 18 feet apart vertically.

(6) Platforms shall not be more than 8 inches below the door sill, or not more than 18 inches below the sill of exit windows; see s. Comm 75.14.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.17 Brackets.** (1) Brackets for a 28 inch or 30 inch platform, when spaced not more than 4 feet apart, shall be made of not less than  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch square bars or  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch angles; such bars or angles shall be larger if the platform is wider or if the brackets are farther apart. Each bracket shall be fastened at the top, to the wall, by a through bolt (at least  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch diameter), nut, and washer (at least 4 inch diameter). The slope of the lower bracket bar shall be not less than  $30^\circ$  with the horizontal. The lower bar shall have a washer or shoulder to give sufficient bearing against the wall.

**Note:** In applying the requirements of the building code to the design of a bracket, the lower bracket bar must be designed according to the column formula. According to this formula (for example), brackets made of 1 inch square wrought iron, 4 feet apart, carrying a 3 feet 4 inches platform, are just within the limit of stiffness. If the brackets were over 4 feet apart, a heavier bar or an angle would have to be used.

(2) The strength of the wall to which brackets are to be attached shall be carefully considered in determining the spacing, shape, and inside connection of brackets, so that under full load the wall will not be unduly strained.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.18 Stairways.** (1) Each stairway of an "A" type fire escape shall be at least 24 inches wide between stringers; such stairway shall have a uniform rise of not more than 8 inches, and a uniform run of not less than 8 inches.

(2) Each stairway of a "B" type fire escape shall be at least 3 feet 4 inches wide between stringers; such stairway shall have a uniform rise of not more than 8 inches, and a uniform run of not less than 9 inches.

**Note:** The rise is the vertical distance from the extreme edge of any step to the corresponding extreme edge of the next step. The run is the horizontal distance between the same points.

(3) Stairway stringers shall consist of either:

- A 5 inch channel or larger.
- Two angles  $2 \times 2 \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch or larger
- Two flat bars  $2 \times \frac{3}{8}$  inch or larger.
- One flat bar  $6 \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch or larger.

(4) If 2 angles or 2 flat bars are used, they shall be properly tied together by lattice bars, vertical as well as horizontal. If flat bars are used, every stairway of more than 10 risers shall have lateral bracing. The connection of stringers to platform, at top and bottom, shall be at least equal in strength to the stringers and shall safely carry the full live and dead loads. If stringers are carried by intermediate brackets, the stringers shall have a horizontal bearing on the brackets and shall be properly and securely connected thereto.

(5) Treads shall consist of either flat or square bars, (not round), of the size and spacing specified for platforms. An "A" tread shall consist of at least 6 square bars or 7 flat bars. A "B" tread shall consist of at least 7 square bars or 8 flat bars. A "B" tread made of flat bars shall have separators and bolt through the

center. A "B" tread made of square bars shall be trussed. Treads and platforms may be solid if covered by a roof.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.19 Balanced stairway.** (1) All "B" type fire escapes, and all fire escapes on schools, theaters, and assembly halls, either shall reach to the ground or shall have a balanced stairway reaching to the ground. "A" type fire escapes which are not on schools, theaters, or assembly halls, may terminate on a platform at least 3 feet long, located not more than 10 feet above the ground.

(2) Every balanced stairway shall conform to the requirements for other stairways except that the stringers and the top rail may be lighter if they are properly trussed. The counterbalancing device shall be attached to both sides of the stairway equally, or a special attachment shall be used to prevent warping or twisting. The counterbalancing device shall operate gradually and easily as the live load is applied.

**Note:** The use of cables and sheaves will be permitted only under exceptional conditions, as rust is almost sure to interfere with their proper operation. In such cases the sheaves shall turn on a brass pin or in brass bearings and shall be protected from the weather at the top and on all sides.

(3) Treads for "A" type balanced stairways may be made as follows: two  $1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch angles at front and back; two  $1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch bars between, lying flatwise; one inch space between bars. Treads for "B" type balanced stairways may be made as follows: two  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch angles at front and back; two  $1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch bars between, lying flatwise; one inch space between bars. All such treads shall be strongly fastened together with cross bars not more than 14 inches apart.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.20 Railings.** (1) Railings shall be provided on all open sides of platforms and stairways, and on both sides of balanced stairways. Either a railing or a handrail fastened to wall shall be provided on each side of all "B" type fire escape stairways. Railings shall be at least 3 feet high, measuring vertically from floor of platform or from nose of step.

(2) Every railing shall have posts, not more than 5 feet apart, made of not less than  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch angles or tees, or  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch pipe; top rail not less than  $1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$  inch angle or equivalent; center rail not less than  $1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{5}{16}$  flat bar or equivalent. All connections shall be such as to make the railing stiff; 2 bolts ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch or larger) shall be used at the foot of each post wherever possible, or at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch bolt shall be used. Railings shall be continuous. No projections on the inside of the railing shall be permitted. Where a railing returns to the wall, it shall be fastened thereto with a through bolt (at least  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch diameter), nut, and washer; or (in reinforced concrete) with an approved insert; or the railing shall be made equally secure with a diagonal brace extending at least 3 feet horizontally and 3 feet vertically.

(3) All outside railings which are more than 60 feet above grade shall be at least 6 feet high, measuring vertically from floor or platform or from nose of step. Such railings shall be of special design approved by the department, having not less than 4 longitudinal rails, and vertical lattice bars not more than 8 inches apart, and proper stiffening braces or brackets.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.21 Ladder to roof.** (1) Every fire escape which extends higher than the second floor shall be provided with a ladder leading from the upper platform to the roof, unless the fire escape stairway leads to the roof. The ladder shall have stringers of not less than  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch pipe, or not less than  $2 \times \frac{3}{8}$  inch flat bars, at least 17 inches apart in the clear. The rungs shall be not less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch square or  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch round bars, 14 inches center to center. The stringers shall be securely tied together at intervals no greater than every fifth rung.

(2) The stringers of each ladder shall extend not less than 4 feet above the roof coping and return to within 2 feet of the roof



with the top rung of the ladder level with the top of the parapet wall.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.22 Standpipe.** (1) A standpipe shall be attached to every fire escape on every building of more than 3 stories not having an automatic sprinkler system; except that buildings requiring more than one fire escape on any side thereof, shall be provided with at least one standpipe on each side.

(2) Every standpipe shall extend from a point within 5 feet of the ground to a point 3 feet above the roof or cornice, and shall be securely fastened to and accessible from each platform. The standpipe shall be made of not less than 3 inch wrought iron pipe, with 2½ inch outlet hose valve at each floor and at roof, and a double Siamese valve at the base of the pipe. All connections shall conform to the size and patterns used by the local fire department, and the entire standpipe shall conform to all requirements of such department.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.23 Other types of fire escape.** Sliding or chute fire escapes may be used, upon the approval of the department, in place of "A" type or "B" type fire escapes. Every sliding fire escape shall be provided with a ladder constructed as in s. Comm 75.21, extending from 5 feet above grade, to 4 feet above the roof coping.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.24 Standard exit doors.** (1) Every door which serves as a required exit from a public passageway, stairway or building, or which forms a horizontal exit, shall be a standard exit door. See also ss. Comm 76.06, 77.06, 78.04, 79.07.

(2) Every standard exit door shall swing outward or toward the natural means of egress (except as below and as in s. Comm 79.07). It shall be so hung that, when open, it will not block any part of the required width of any other doorway, passageway, stairway, or fire escape. No revolving door (unless collapsible) and no sliding door, (except where it opens onto a stairway enclosure, or serves as a horizontal exit) shall be considered as a standard exit door. Where revolving doors are used, they shall be of a type and make approved by the department.

(3) A standard exit door shall have such fastenings or hardware that it can be opened from the inside without using a key, by pushing against a single bar or plate, or turning a single knob or handle; it shall not be locked, barred, or bolted at any time while the building is occupied.

**Note:** For theaters, schools, large factories and hotels, etc., the "panic bolt" which operates by pressure against a bar or plate is recommended.

(4) An approved type, illuminated, transparent exit sign shall be provided and operated over all exit doors in accordance with ss. Comm 76.06, 77.14 and 79.08. Exit lights shall be installed as required by the Wisconsin state electrical code.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.25 Location and maintenance of exits.** Every required exit (including stairways, fire escapes, horizontal exits, and doors) shall lead to a street, alley or open court connected with a street. All such exits, and all passageways leading to and from the same, shall be kept in good repair and unobstructed at all times.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.26 First aid standpipes.** (1) For the number and location of first aid standpipes required in buildings of various classes, see ss. Comm 76.09, 78.07.

(2) Standpipes shall be sufficient in number so that any part of every floor area can be reached within 20 feet by a nozzle attached to not more than 75 feet of hose connected to a standpipe.

(3) No required standpipe shall be less than 2 inches in diameter, and not less than 2½ inches in diameter for buildings 5 stories or more in height. An approved 1½ inch hose valve shall be located in each story, not more than 5 feet above the floor level; valves of the gate type shall be equipped with a suitable open drip connection. An approved pressure-reducing device shall be installed at hose valves where pressure would otherwise be over 50 pounds.

(4) Not more than 75 feet of hose shall be attached to each outlet. Hose shall be of unlined linen construction, 1½ inches in diameter, with a ½ inch nozzle attached, and shall be located in approved cabinets or racks.

(5) Water supply shall be automatic, and be designed for 70 gallons per minute for 30 minutes with 25 pounds flowing pressure at the top outlet. Such supply may be from city connection, gravity tank, pressure tank or pump.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.27 Fire extinguishers.** (1) Where fire extinguishers are required, they shall be of a type approved by the department. All fire extinguishers shall be charged in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer.

(2) Extinguishers shall be conspicuously located where they will always be readily accessible and so distributed as to be immediately available in event of fire. They shall be hung on hangers or set on brackets or shelves so that the top of the extinguisher is not more than 5 feet above the floor.

**Note:** The department will ordinarily approve any installation which is approved by the National Board of Fire Underwriters.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.28 Automatic sprinklers.** (1) Required automatic sprinkler systems shall be designed and constructed in conformity with good established practice. Only materials and devices approved by the department may be used. Re-installation of used sprinkler heads is prohibited, and other second hand devices may be installed by special permission only.

(2) Where an automatic sprinkler system is required throughout a building, supply shall be from a city water main, or from a gravity or pressure tank. If the city water supply is inadequate in either pressure or volume, a tank of not less than 5,000 gallons capacity shall be provided. The bottom of a gravity tank shall be not less than 35 feet above the under side of the roof.

(3) Where automatic sprinklers are required in a basement only, the supply shall be from a city water main. Where there is no city water supply, such basement sprinklers need not be installed, but at such time as a city supply becomes available, such required basement sprinklers shall be installed.

(4) Every basement sprinkler system shall also include sprinklers in all shafts (except elevator shafts) leading to the story above.

(5) Every sprinkler system shall have a suitable audible alarm and an approved Siamese connection marked "To Automatic Sprinklers".

**Note:** The department will ordinarily approve any installation which is approved by the National Board of Fire Underwriters.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.29 Fire alarm systems.** (1) Interior fire alarm systems required under ss. Comm 76.11, 78.08 and 79.18 shall be designed and constructed in conformity with the following requirements.

(2) All such alarm systems shall consist of operating stations on each floor of the building, including the basement, with bells, horns, or other approved sounding devices which are effective throughout the building. The system shall be so arranged that the operation of any one station will actuate all alarm devices connected to the system except in the case of a presignal system. Fire alarms shall be readily distinguishable from any other signaling devices used in the building. A system designed for fire alarm and paging service may be used if the design is such that fire alarm signals will have precedence over all others.

(3) Every fire alarm system shall be electrically operated except as stated in s. Comm 78.08 and shall be operated on closed circuit current under constant electrical supervision, so arranged that upon a circuit opening and remaining open, or in case of a ground or short circuit in the ungrounded conductor, audible trouble signals will be given instantly.

(4) In buildings more than 3 stories in height, coded fire alarm systems shall be provided, and the systems shall be so arranged that the code transmitted shall indicate the location and the story of the structure in which the signal originated.

(4m) In apartment buildings less than 6 stories in height and having less than 5,000 square feet area per floor, non-coded, electrically supervised, continuous ringing fire alarm systems will be accepted.

(5) Operating stations shall be prominently located in an accessible position at all required exit doors and required exit stairways. Operating stations shall be of an approved type and shall be conspicuously identified. All such operating stations shall be of a type, which after being operated, will indicate that an alarm has been sent therefrom until reset by an authorized means. (Operating stations having a "Break Glass" panel will be acceptable. On coded systems having a device to permanently record the transmission of an alarm, "Open Door" type stations may be used.) The fire alarm operating stations shall be mounted approximately 5 feet above the finished floor as measured from the floor to the center of the box.

(6) All such alarm systems shall be tested at least once a week and a record of such tests shall be kept.

(7) Existing fire alarm systems that are effective in operation will be accepted if approved by the department.

**Note:** The following sections are taken from the Wisconsin state electrical code.

(9) The energy for operation of fire alarm systems shall be taken from sources suited to the design of the system. Primary batteries shall not be used.

(10) A 3 wire 110-220 volt service will be accepted for supervised systems, providing the operating current is secured from one ungrounded conductor and the neutral or grounded conductor and the current for operation of trouble signal (or signals) is secured from the other ungrounded conductor and the neutral or grounded conductor.

(11) Electrical wiring in connection with fire alarm systems shall be installed in rigid metal conduit, flexible metal conduit, electrical metallic tubing or surface metal raceway, armored cable (metal) may be used where it can be fished in hollow spaces of walls or partitions in apartments or rooming houses not over 3 stories in height. Where the wiring is subject to excessive moisture or severe mechanical injury, rigid metal conduit shall be used. The smallest size conductor to be used in any fire alarm system in a building over 3 stories in height shall be #14 AWG, or #16 AWG for buildings not over 3 stories in height. The wires shall be provided with insulation suitable for use on circuits not exceeding 600 volts. Fire alarm systems shall be connected to the line side of the service switch or to the emergency bus, where available, through an approved fire alarm cut-out or equivalent.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.30 Boilers, furnaces and stoves.** (1) PROTECTION OF FLOOR. Except as provided in ss. Comm 76.13, 77.31, 78.09 and 79.20, every existing boiler, furnace or oven shall be placed on a fire-resistive floor projecting at least 2 feet on all sides. Such floor shall also be provided for every coal, wood, or oil stove or range which is more than 16 square feet in horizontal area or which has a flame at the bottom. If any such floor rests on or is in contact with any combustible material, then the fire-resistive floor layer shall be at least 3 inches thick and shall be hollow, with air spaces running horizontally through the same. The air spaces shall be open at both ends and shall be so placed that air can circulate through them; their horizontal area shall equal at least one-half the horizontal area of the fire-resistive slab.

**Note:** The purpose of these air spaces is to permit air to circulate through the fire-resistive slab and keep down its temperature. When a range or a heater rests on a solid layer of brick or concrete, it has been found that after several months the heat strikes through to the wood below. Many fires have been caused in this way.

(2) AIR SPACES. The air spaces may be secured by using hollow tile placed end to end; or by imbedding wrought or sheet iron pipes (say 3 inch diameter or larger) in a layer of concrete. The air spaces should run parallel to the short dimension of the slab.

(3) FIRE-RESISTIVE FLOOR LAYER. If the stove, range, etc., is raised at least 6 inches above the floor and such air space is not enclosed, then the fire-resistive floor layer may be reduced to not less than 2 inch solid thickness, without air spaces, provided it is covered with sheet metal.

(4) COAL, WOOD, OIL STOVE. Every coal, wood or oil stove or range not more than 16 square feet in horizontal area and not having a flame at the bottom shall, if placed on a combustible floor, be raised at least 6 inches above the floor, and such air space shall not be enclosed. Such floor shall be protected with a stove board of sheet metal or asbestos, projecting at least one foot on all sides.

(5) GAS STOVE. Gas stoves shall be protected as above specified, except that:

(a) A 3 inch solid fire-resistive floor layer, projecting at least 6 inches on all sides shall be sufficient protection if the stove has a false bottom at least 3 inches above such fire-resistive floor; and

(b) If the stove is less than 16 square feet in horizontal area and has a false bottom at least 5 inches above the floor, no fire-resistive floor shall be required.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.31 Protection of walls and ceiling; repair; fireplaces.** (1) Except as otherwise provided in s. Comm 75.30, every combustible wall, partition or ceiling which is less than 24 inches distant from a boiler, furnace, oven, stove, or range, shall be protected with at least 1/4 inch asbestos board covered with galvanized sheet metal, or with equivalent protection as specified in s. Comm 75.11, or shall be protected with a metal shield with at least 4 inches air space behind the same, except as provided below.

If the wall, partition, or ceiling is less than 12 inches distant from the boiler, furnace, oven, stove or range, then the woodwork and studs shall be cut away and replaced with incombustible material; or shall be otherwise protected as required by the department or the fire department.

(2) The above distances may be reduced one-half in the case of stoves and ranges less than 16 square feet in area, and also in the case of gas ranges of greater area if proper insulation is incorporated in the back of the range.

(3) The top of every boiler, furnace or oven, shall be covered with asbestos, sand, or other heat resisting material, or the required distance above same shall be increased 100%.

(4) All cracked, broken or otherwise defective stoves, furnaces and boilers, shall be repaired forthwith, and made safe, or shall be replaced with new ones.

(5) All open fireplaces shall be protected by substantial wire screens.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.32 Smoke pipes.** (1) No smoke pipe shall pass through any floor, outside window or door, nor through any combustible roof or combustible outside wall, nor through any closet, attic or similarly concealed space.

(2) Every smoke pipe passing through a non-fire-resistive partition shall be encased with incombustible material at least 4 inches thick or with a double safety thimble made of 2 concentric rings of sheet metal with at least one inch open air space between and with outer ring covered with at least 1/4 inch asbestos.

**Note:** The double thimble is of no value unless it is kept free from dirt. The best protection is a casing of solid masonry, with 1/4 space between the masonry and the pipe.

(3) No part of any smoke pipe shall be placed nearer to any combustible partition or wall than the diameter of the pipe, nor nearer to any combustible ceiling than one and one-half times the diameter; but the above distances may be reduced by one-half, if the wall or ceiling is covered with not less than 1/4 inch asbestos board covered with galvanized sheet metal, or with equivalent protection as specified in s. Comm 75.11

**History:** 1-2-56; renum. and am., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, June, 1995, No. 474.

**Comm 75.33 Hot air pipes.** Every hot air pipe contained in or passing through a combustible partition or floor, shall be covered with asbestos, or all wood within 2 inches of such pipe shall be protected with asbestos covered with sheet metal, unless such hot air pipe is double.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.34 Chimneys.** (1) No chimney shall rest upon a flooring of wood, nor shall any wood or other combustible material be built into or left in contact with any chimney.

(2) All chimneys which are defective by reason of settling, cracking, disintegrating of mortar, or from any other cause, shall be repaired or rebuilt forthwith and made safe.

(3) All chimneys constructed of tile, terra cotta, or brick on edge, shall be replaced by a substantial brick chimney.

(4) All chimneys shall be thoroughly cleaned at least once each year.

**Note:** For requirements applying to the construction, remodeling and repair of chimneys, see the state building code issued by the department.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.35 Gas and oil lamps; gas service.** (1) Gas and oil lamps shall not be used where electricity is available.

(2) Gas and oil lamps shall be placed at least 6 feet above the floor level, at least 6 inches from any combustible partition or

wall, and at least 2 feet (measured from top of flame) below any combustible ceiling unless properly protected by a metal shield with at least 2 inches of air space above. Swinging brackets shall be provided with a guard or stop so that the light cannot come nearer to the partition or wall than one foot. In aisles and public passageways, every such light shall be protected by an incombustible guard unless the light is at least 7 feet above the floor. Gas and oil lights shall be kept at least 2 feet from any drape or window curtain.

(3) Every gas supply main shall have a service cock outside of the building, so placed and maintained that it can be shut off at any time without entering the building.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.36 Electrical work.** (1) All new electrical work shall conform to the Wisconsin state electrical code of the department.

(2) All electrical wiring and installation which by reason of insufficient supports, defective insulation, contact with combustible materials, or with conductors of electricity, deterioration, faulty materials or from any other cause, is liable to cause fire, shall forthwith be overhauled, repaired or replaced, and made safe, and all such repair work shall be done as required by said Wisconsin state electrical code.

(3) Electric cords shall not be hung on or be fastened with or come in contact with nails, staples, hooks, gas or water pipes, machinery or other metal supports.

(4) Pendant lamps must be free from contact with furniture, machinery, posts or other fixtures.

(5) Where portable electric lights must be used, the same shall be equipped with socket of non-combustible, non-absorbent insulating material, large handle of non-absorbent insulating material, basket guard, proper reflector and special heavy duty cord of the reinforced or similar type.

**Note:** For fire prevention requirements, see ch. Comm 14.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.

**Comm 75.37 Combustible drapes, decorations.**

(1) No drapes, curtains or decorations (except within a private apartment or a hotel guest room) of paper, cotton, cloth or any other combustible material shall be used in any building covered by this code unless effectively flameproofed in an approved manner.

(1m) This requirement does not apply to drapes and decorations on display in retail establishments.

(2) Where drapes, curtains or decorations are of a permanent or semi-permanent nature, there shall be affixed thereto a tag or other indication stating the date on which the flame-proofing was done and signed by the firm or person doing the work.

**Note:** The ordinary methods of flame-proofing are only effective for a period of from 6 months to a year and for this reason the flame-proofing treatment must be renewed within this period.

**History:** 1-2-56; renum., Register, September, 1974, No. 225, eff. 10-1-74.