

not be more than 9½ inches (241 mm). The minimum *stairway* clear width at and below the *handrail* shall be 26 inches (660 mm).

**1011.11 Handrails.** *Flights of stairways* shall have *handrails* on each side and shall comply with Section 1014. Where glass is used to provide the *handrail*, the *handrail* shall comply with Section 2407.

**Exceptions:**

1. *Flights of stairways* within dwelling units and *flights of spiral stairways* are permitted to have a *handrail* on one side only.
2. Decks, patios and walkways that have a single change in elevation where the landing depth on each side of the change of elevation is greater than what is required for a landing do not require *handrails*.
3. In Group R-3 occupancies, a change in elevation consisting of a single riser at an entrance or egress door does not require *handrails*.
4. Changes in room elevations of three or fewer risers within dwelling units and sleeping units in Group R-2 and R-3 do not require *handrails*.

**1011.12 Stairway to roof.** In buildings four or more stories above *grade plane*, one *stairway* shall extend to the roof surface unless the roof has a slope steeper than four units vertical in 12 units horizontal (33-percent slope).

**Exception:** Other than where required by Section 1011.12.1, in buildings without an occupied roof access to the roof from the top story shall be permitted to be by an *alternating tread device*, a ships ladder or a permanent ladder.

**1011.12.1 Stairway to elevator equipment.** Roofs and penthouses containing elevator equipment that must be accessed for maintenance are required to be accessed by a stairway.

**1011.12.2 Roof access.** Where a stairway is provided to a roof, access to the roof shall be provided through a penthouse complying with Section 1510.2.

**Exception:** In buildings without an occupied roof, access to the roof shall be permitted to be a roof hatch or trap door not less than 16 square feet (1.5 m²) in area and having a minimum dimension of 2 feet (610 mm).

**1011.13 Guards.** Guards shall be provided along stairways and landings where required by Section 1015 and shall be constructed in accordance with Section 1015. Where the roof hatch opening providing the required access is located within 10 feet (3049 mm) of the roof edge, such roof access or roof edge shall be protected by guards installed in accordance with Section 1015.

**1011.14 Alternating tread devices.** *Alternating tread devices* are limited to an element of a *means of egress* in buildings of Groups F, H and S from a mezzanine not more than 250 square feet (23 m²) in area and that serves not more than five occupants; in buildings of Group I-3 from a guard tower, observation station or control room not more than 250 square feet (23 m²) in area and for access to unoccupied roofs. *Alternating tread devices* used as a means of egress

shall not have a rise greater than 20 feet (6096 mm) between floor levels or landings.

**1011.14.1 Handrails of alternating tread devices.** Handrails shall be provided on both sides of alternating tread devices and shall comply with Section 1014.

**1011.14.2 Treads of alternating tread devices.** *Alternating tread devices* shall have a minimum tread depth of 5 inches (127 mm), a minimum projected tread depth of 8½ inches (216 mm), a minimum tread width of 7 inches (178 mm) and a maximum riser height of 9½ inches (241 mm). The tread depth shall be measured horizontally between the vertical planes of the foremost projections of adjacent treads. The riser height shall be measured vertically between the leading edges of adjacent treads. The riser height and tread depth provided shall result in an angle of ascent from the horizontal of between 50 and 70 degrees (0.87 and 1.22 rad). The initial tread of the device shall begin at the same elevation as the platform, landing or floor surface.

**Exception:** *Alternating tread devices* used as an element of a *means of egress* in buildings from a mezzanine area not more than 250 square feet (23 m²) in area that serves not more than five occupants shall have a minimum tread depth of 3 inches (76 mm) with a minimum projected tread depth of 10½ inches (267 mm). The rise to the next alternating tread surface shall not exceed 8 inches (203 mm).

**1011.15 Ships ladders.** Ships ladders are permitted to be used in Group I-3 as a component of a *means of egress* to and from control rooms or elevated facility observation stations not more than 250 square feet (23 m²) with not more than three occupants and for access to unoccupied roofs. The minimum clear width at and below the *handrails* shall be 20 inches (508 mm).

**1011.15.1 Handrails of ships ladders.** *Handrails* shall be provided on both sides of ships ladders.

**1011.15.2 Treads of ships ladders.** Ships ladders shall have a minimum tread depth of 5 inches (127 mm). The tread shall be projected such that the total of the tread depth plus the *nosing* projection is not less than 8½ inches (216 mm). The maximum riser height shall be 9½ inches (241 mm).

**1011.16 Ladders.** Permanent ladders shall not serve as a part of the *means of egress* from occupied spaces within a building. Permanent ladders shall be constructed in accordance with Section 306.5 of the *International Mechanical Code*. Permanent ladders shall be permitted to provide access to the following areas:

1. Spaces frequented only by personnel for maintenance, repair or monitoring of equipment.
2. Nonoccupiable spaces accessed only by catwalks, crawl spaces, freight elevators or very narrow passageways.
3. Raised areas used primarily for purposes of security, life safety or fire safety including, but not limited to, observation galleries, prison guard towers, fire towers or lifeguard stands.