

NationalFireEscapeAssociation.org

City of Lowell MA – LowellMA.gov- Robert Marsilia 978-674-4144
INDUSTRY STANDARD DOCUMENTATION AND GUIDELINES FOR INSPECTIONS, REPAIRS,
PAINTING AND FIRE/CODE/HOUSING INSPECTOR TRAINING SEMINARS 888-214-4888

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Development Services (formerly Inspectional Services)

The Division of Development Services exists to provide a **one-stop center** for land-use, permitting and code enforcement activities in the City. We are committed to protecting and preserving public safety, security and quiet enjoyment of the residents through the review and enforcement of building and sanitary codes, and the evaluation of land-development and use proposals for adherence to the goals and objectives of the City's **Master Plan and Zoning Code**.

Check out our **Quick Links** on the right for easy access to applications, fees, frequently asked questions, and more!

For more information about **Project Review, Permits, Licenses, to report a complaint or potential Code violation, or to schedule an inspection please contact 978.674.4144.**

Dept Contact Info

Department of Planning and Development

Division of Development Services

Division Head:

Kendra Amaral
Deputy Director, DPD

Robert Marsilia
Building Commissioner



Departmental Procedures & Guidelines For Inspections, Repairs & Painting of Fire Escapes

Inspections

In layman's terms, the city official is looking for a registered structural engineer or others qualified and acceptable by the Fire/Code Official to do a **Critical Examination** in lieu of a **Live Load Test** (criteria submitted or discussed prior to inspection) and issues written verification and certification that all connections are free of internal rust or rot as well as all original hardware (square head bolts or rivet) are reinforced and or replaced in lieu of **Live Load Test**. All supports (thru-bolts or cemented) into the wall must be verified and certified in lieu of **Live Load Test**. A fire escape confidence test and tag must be submitted if fire escape passed. The report with photos identifying violations for repairs must include repair criteria submitted to the official for repair vendor to use as a guide during and with engineer oversight of permitted repairs. A **Fire Escape Confidence Test** and tags identifying certified condition are then submitted. Recommended cycle for live load testing is 20 yrs after total refurbishment or as required by official.

Repairs

In layman's terms, the city official is looking for a qualified licensed repair vendor to do all work under repair permit (if required) with engineer oversight of repair criteria submitted for approval to the official in lieu of **Live Load Test**. All connections must be free of internal rust or rot, spot primed and sealed. All worn material repaired and or replaced. All supports into wall reinforced, repaired and certified in a **Fire Escape Confidence Test**. In lieu of **Live Load Test**, all square head bolts, rivets and or welded connections must be certified, reinforced and or replaced based on age or condition. All ladders and cantilevers must be balanced and drop 2-3 ft per second, hit the ground and stay down and must lead to a public way. All roof ladders must be secure. No full painting of any fire escape until all spot painted repairs are inspected and certified under engineer oversight and or city official permit sign-off – all in accordance with OSHA Safety and Construction guidelines. **Full replacement is subject to permits and or possible code upgrade requirements.**

Painting

In layman's terms, the city official is looking for a paint vendor (EPA Certified Renovator if required) to do all work as per EPA Guidelines due to the fact that all fire escapes older than 1978 are presumed to have lead (EPA) unless identified as no lead or low lead by a licensed lead inspector. Entire building will be notified with signage and all precautions shall be taken to collect paint chips at grade. No sandblasting or power assisted scraping without full fire escape encapsulation under EPA Guidelines. All major connection shall be sealed from water intrusion before during or after painting. All escapes should be spot painted every 3-5 yrs and fully painted every 5-10 yrs or as needed or ordered by a Fire/Code Official.



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MASS BUILDING CODE 1001.3 TESTING AND CERTIFICATION ALL EXTERIOR BRIDGES, STEEL OR WOODEN STAIRWAYS, FIRE ESCAPES AND EGRESS BALCONIES SHALL BE EXAMINED AND OR TESTED, AND CERTIFIED FOR STRUCTURAL ADEQUACY AND SAFETY EVERY FIVE YEARS, BY A MASS REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, OR OTHER QUALIFIED AND ACCEPTABLE TO THE BUILDING OFFICIAL, WHO SHALL THEN SUBMIT AN AFFIDAVIT TO THE BUILDING OFFICIAL.

NFPA LIFE SAFETY CODE 101 7.2.8.6.2 THE AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION SHALL BE PERMITTED TO APPROVE ANY EXISTING FIRE ESCAPE STAIR THAT HAS BEEN SHOWN BY LOAD TEST OR OTHER SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE TO HAVE ADEQUATE STRENGTH.

