

FIRE INSPECTION TIP #2

Fire Safety of Press Boxes

Press Boxes are no longer limited to football fields. Many school districts have multiple Press Boxes within the district. The SED requirements for construction of Press Boxes are found on our web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/facplan/articles/F04.htm>. What most people don't realize is that since ALL Press Boxes were required to be built to this standard then these same standards are retroactive for ALL existing Press boxes.

Fire Safety Inspectors should be looking for the following:

- The maximum occupancy on each floor level shall be determined on the basis of 15 square feet per person. Appropriate signs limiting occupancy must be posted.
- Exiting is provided as required by the building code. The primary exit shall be a conventional stair, a 60-degree ships ladder, or a four foot minimum diameter spiral stair. Noncombustible bleachers or grandstands may also be used for primary exiting. Exit stairs need not be enclosed, however, consideration should be given to local concerns for the prevention of vandalism.
- Additionally, SED requires a remote second means of egress to be provided from each floor level, this includes the roof when it is a useable platform. The second means of egress from the interior may be through a rescue window or panel with a minimum clear opening area of six square feet and a minimum dimension of 24 inches. A rescue window is to have a vertical ladder or access directly to bleachers or grandstands as the second means of egress.
- The primary exit from a useable roof is not allowed to be a conventional vertical ladder. The exit options are the same as the interior of the press box. A second means of egress is also required from the roof when it is a useable platform. A vertical ladder or retractable egress ladder is minimally required for a second means of egress from the roof.
- Guardrails and toe boards are required at all openings and open sides of stairs. Handrails are required on one side of stairs and both sides of ships ladders.
- Hardware on exit doors shall be at least classroom function. No dead bolts or padlock hasps are allowed on any Press Box.

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