

Information Bulletin / Public - Building Code - Guidelines and Requirements for Installing and Maintaining Rooftop Gardens and Landscaped Roofs			
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City of Los Angeles – Department of Building & Safety

Guidelines and Requirements for Installing and Maintaining Rooftop Gardens and Landscaped Roofs

I. Guidelines

Rooftop gardens are becoming more prevalent while promoting a green outdoor space in an urban setting. Roof gardens located on the roof of a commercial or residential building provide much needed green space for people to enjoy while providing an aesthetically pleasing and functional area.

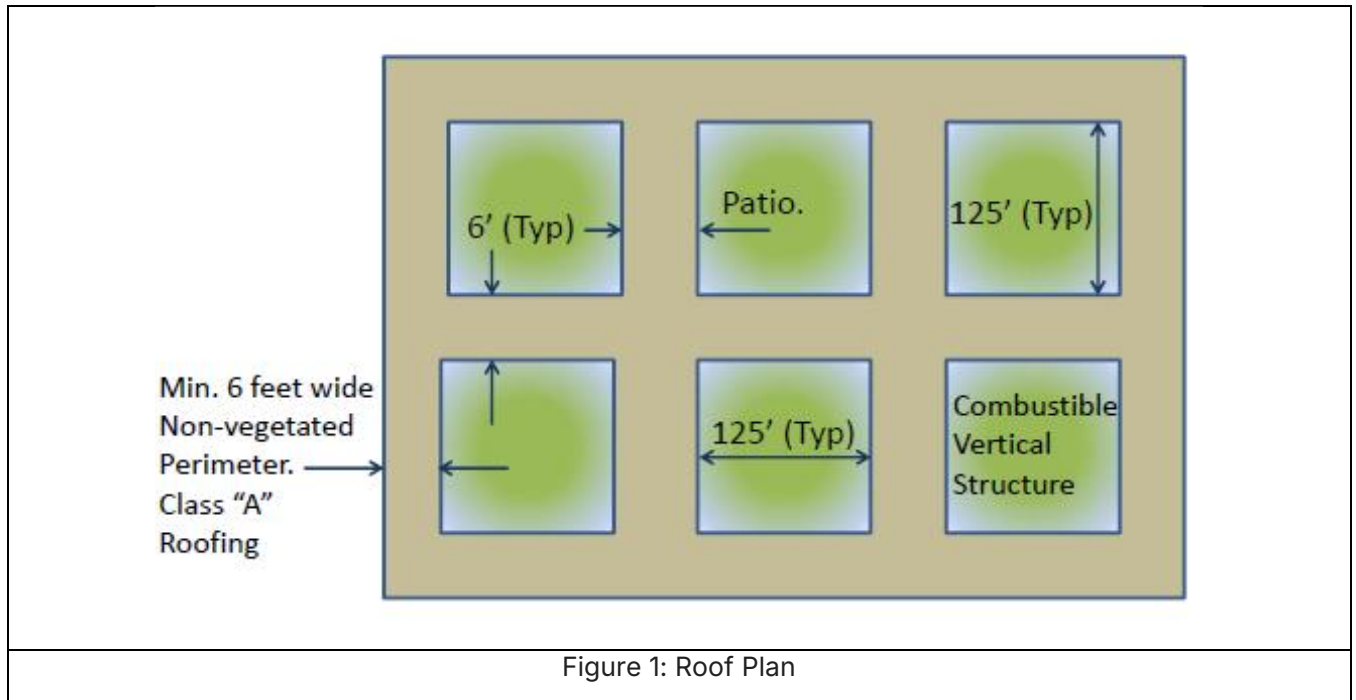
This Information Bulletin establishes guidelines and requirements for occupied rooftop gardens or unoccupied landscaped roofs.

Any rooftop uses shall require a full plan review, permits and inspections for occupants and structural safety based on how the building roof is to be used. **If the rooftop garden layout is revised, a new building permit will be required.**

The following shall apply to both occupied and unoccupied rooftop gardens:

- Supplemental irrigation system to maintain levels of hydration. (LAMC 57.317.4.1)
- Fueled equipment, for maintenance, shall be stored as required by the Los Angeles Fire Code (LAFC). LAMC 57.313
- 42" high minimum guards shall be provided along the edge of the rooftop deck area in compliance with the Los Angeles Building Code (LABC Section 1015). The guards shall be included in the height measurement of the building.
- Adequate drainage system shall be provided for planters and roof deck area and maintained to prevent water from ponding.
- Adequate waterproofing of the roof from the planted vegetation and its irrigation is required.
- Provide a minimum 6'-0" wide, non-vegetated Fire Department access around the perimeter edge of the roof. When the planting area reaches 125 feet in length or width, provide an intermediate 6'-0" wide access in between the planting area at every 125 feet (see Figure 1) using Class A Roofing. (LAMC 57.317.3)
- Standpipe systems shall be extended to roof levels where rooftop gardens and landscaped roofs are provided. (LABC Section 905.3.7).
- Structural evaluation of the roof and supporting members for additional weight and earthquake loads (weight of the saturated green roof) and live load of the occupants shall be performed by a California licensed structural engineer, civil engineer, or architect.
- Appropriate steps shall be taken to prevent loose foliage and other debris from being collected on the roof deck or falling on the adjacent public way.
- A sign shall be posted on each door between the stairway and the roof, indicating the following information
 1. Maximum design load
 2. Whether the rooftop garden can be occupied or not occupied
 3. If an occupied rooftop garden, the maximum occupant load
- Any localized requirements (e.g, Specific Plan, Q condition, etc. shown in ZIMAS) shall be complied with. Check with the designated City Planning staff for requirements for each site.

- The maximum allowable area, occupancy type, and occupant load shall be in accordance with the current Los Angeles Building Code. Occupied roofs open to sky shall be considered a floor for the purpose of LABC Section 403.
- The minimum number of exits shall be provided based on the occupant load of the occupied roof per the Los Angeles Building Code and the Los Angeles Residential Code. Open areas such as lawn shall be considered as an assembly area.
- Combustible vertical structures and equipment on the roof, provide a minimum 6' wide continuous border all around any combustible vertical structures and equipment on the roof. (LAMC Section 57.317.3.)



Los Angeles Fire Department List of Flammable Plant Species:

- Acacia (Mimosoideae Acacieae)
- Big Pod Ceanothus (Ceanothus Megacarpus)
- Black Sage (Salvia Mellifera)
- California Buckwheat (Eriogonum Fasciculatum)
- California Sagebrush (Artemisia Californica)
- California Scrub Oak (Quercus Dumosa)
- Cedar (Cedrus)
- Chamise or Greasewood (Adenostoma Fasciculatum)
- Cypress (Cupressaceae)
- Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus Globus)
- Fir (Abies)
- Hoary Leaf Ceanothus (Ceanothus Crassifolius)
- Hollyleaf Redberry (Rhamnus Illicifolia)
- Juniper (Juniperus)
- Manzanita (Arctostaphylos Densiflora)
- Manzanita (Arctostaphylos Glauca)
- Mountain Mahogany (Ceanothus Betuloides)
- Mule Fat (Baccharis Viminea)
- Pampas Grass (Cortaderia selloana)

- Pine (*Pinus Aphremphous*)
- Poison Oak (*Rhus Diversiloba*)
- Purple Sage (*Salvia Leucophylla*)
- Southern Honeysuckle (*Lonicera Johnstonii*)
- Spanish Broom (*Cytisus Monsepessulanus*)
- Sugar Bush (*Rhus Ovata*)
- Tree Tobacco (*Nicotiana Glauca*)
- White Sage (*Salvia Apiana*)
- Conifers
- Palms
- Italian Cypress

II. High Fire and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (HFHSZ & VHFHSZ)

Projects located within a HFHSZ or VHFHSZ shall demonstrate compliance with the 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code (CWUIC) and other relevant codes including but not limited to CCR Title 14 Division 1.5 Chapter 7 Subchapter 3 Article 3, California Government Code Section 51182, CCR Title 19 Division 1 Chapter 7 Subchapter 1, and the LAMC. The rooftop vegetation may not be permitted in a HFHSZ or VHFHSZ in accordance with these codes.