

FACT SHEET: REQUIREMENTS FOR BLEACHER SAFETY

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

WHAT ARE BLEACHER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS?

All bleachers or bleacher open spaces over 55 inches above grade or the floor below, and all bleacher guardrails if any part of the guardrail is over 30 inches above grade or the floor below, must conform to the following safety requirements:

- The open space between bleacher footboards, seats and guardrails must not exceed four inches, unless approved safety nets are installed. Retractable bleachers already in place before Jan. 1, 2001, and any bleachers owned by the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities or a private college or university may have open spaces up to nine inches.
- Bleachers must have vertical perimeter guardrails with no more than four-inch rail spacing between approved vertical rails.
- Operators and owners of places of public accommodation with bleachers already in place as of Jan. 1, 2001, must have provided a signed certification of compliance to the commissioner by Jan. 1, 2002.
- All bleachers manufactured, installed, sold, or distributed after Jan. 1, 2001, are “new bleachers” and must comply with the State Building Code in effect at the time and these safety requirements. The current standard for “new bleachers” is ICC-300. See: <https://codes.iccsafe.org/public/document/MBC2015/icc-300-bleachers-folding-and-telescopic-seating-and-grandstands>.

WHAT IS A BLEACHER?

Any tiered or stepped seating facility, whether temporary or permanent, used in a place of public accommodation.

WHAT IS A PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION?

For the purposes of bleacher safety, a place of public accommodation means a public or privately owned sports or entertainment arena, gymnasium, auditorium, stadium, hall, special event center in a public park, or other facility for public assembly, using bleachers for occupant seating.

DO SAFETY REQUIREMENTS APPLY STATEWIDE?

Yes. Effective Jan. 1, 2001, all places of public accommodation containing bleachers must comply with the requirements for bleacher safety. See Minnesota Statute 326B.112 at www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=326B.112.



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEW BLEACHER SAFETY CONSTRUCTION?

- The municipal building official is responsible for enforcement in code-enforced areas.
- Statutory or home rule charter cities that have not adopted the State Building Code are responsible for enforcement
- The county is responsible for enforcement of bleacher safety in all other areas that have not adopted the State Building Code.

ARE ALL BLEACHERS SUBJECT TO PERIODIC INSPECTIONS?

- Yes. Bleacher footboards and guardrails must be re-inspected at least every five years and a structural inspection must be completed at least every ten years.
- Operators and owners of places of public accommodation with bleachers must retain evidence that the bleachers have been re-inspected and are in compliance, and make those reports available when requested.

WHO PERFORMS THE PERIODIC INSPECTIONS?

A school district or nonpublic school may use the person responsible for buildings and grounds. In all other places of public accommodation a certified building official or state-licensed design professional must conduct the periodic inspections.