



LINCS BUILDING
CONSULTANCY

Guidance Note No. 39

Safe Opening and
Cleaning of Windows in
Non-domestic Buildings

N3 – Safe opening and closing of windows etc.

This does not apply to dwellings.

Windows, skylights and ventilators which can be opened by people in or about the building shall be so constructed or equipped that they may be opened, closed or adjusted safely.

Location Controls

- a) Where controls can be reached without leaning over an obstruction they should not be more than 1.9m above the floor or permanent stable surface provided to give access. Small recesses, such as window reveals, should be ignored.
- b) Where there is an obstruction the control should be lower, e.g. not more than 1.7m, where there is a 600mm deep obstruction (including any recess) not more than 900mm high.

Prevention of falls

Where there is a danger of the operator or other person falling through a window above ground floor level, suitable opening limiters should be fitted or guarding should be provided.

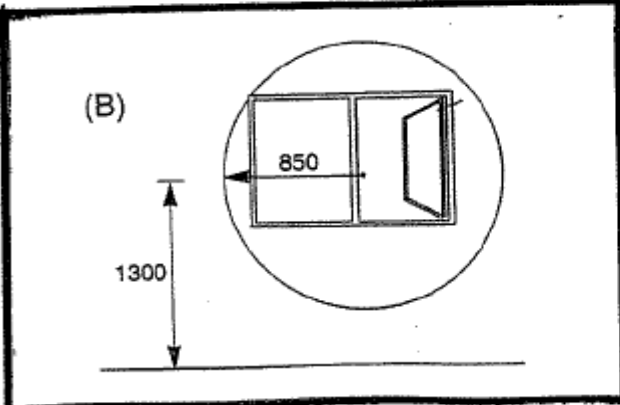
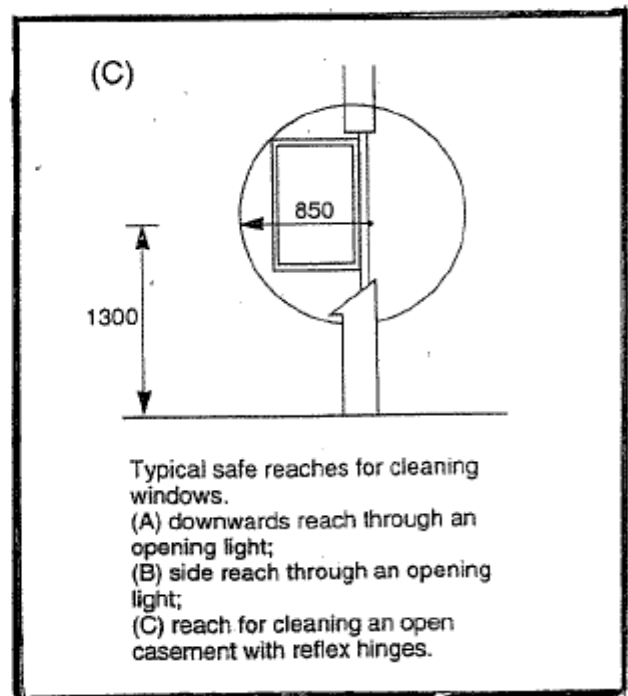
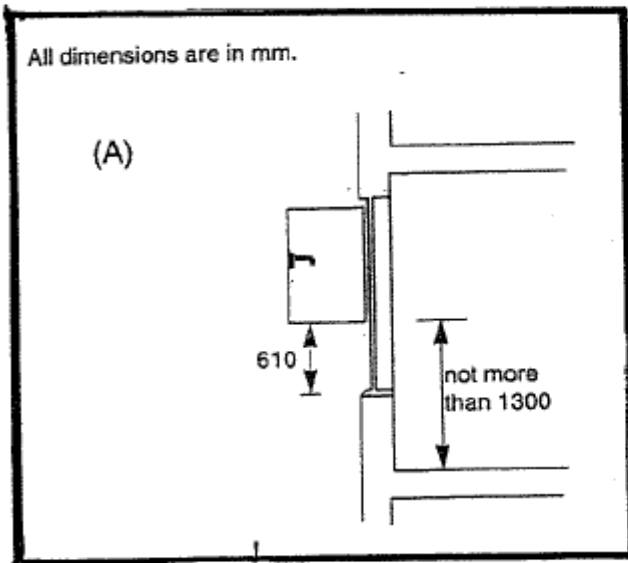
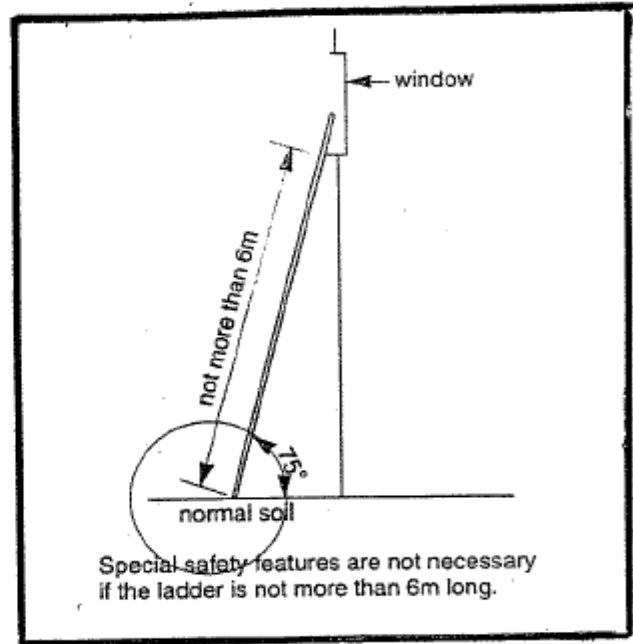
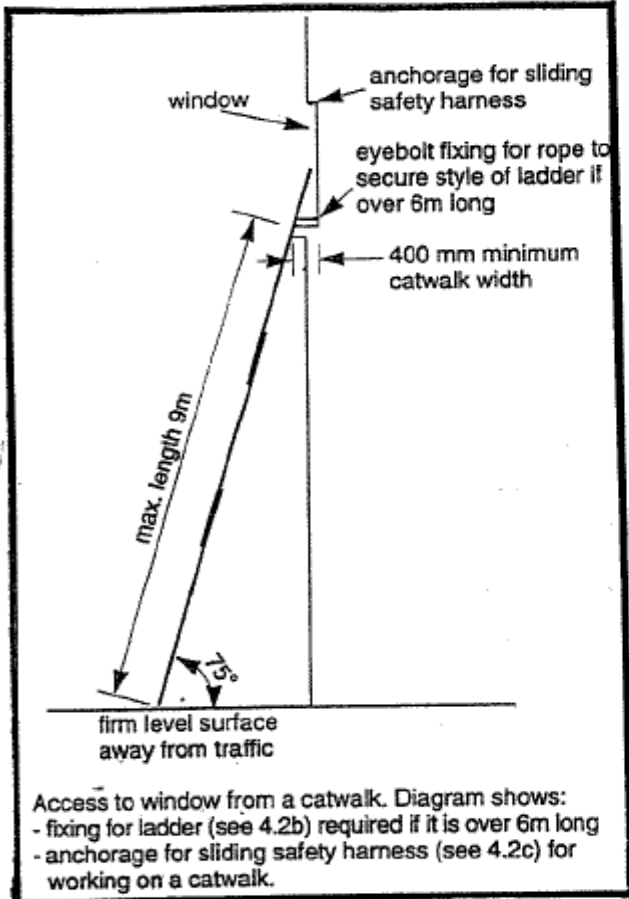
N4 - Safe access for cleaning windows

Requirement N4 does not apply to: (a) dwellings, or (b) any transparent or translucent element whose surfaces are not intended to be cleaned.

See diagrams opposite

- (a) provision of windows of a size and design that allow the outside surface to be cleaned safely from inside the building. Windows which reverse for cleaning should be fitted with a mechanism which holds the window in the reversed position. Additional guidance is given in BS8213: Part 1 Windows, doors and rooflights (Approved Document K contains guidance on minimal sill height.);
- (b) provision of an adequate area of firm level surface, in a safe place, to allow use of portable ladders not more than 9m long (measured from the ground to the upper support). Where ladders up to 6m long will be used, normal soil will provide a suitable standing surface. Where ladders over 6m long will be used, suitable tying or fixing points should be provided;
- (c) provision of walkways at least 400mm wide, either with a guarding at least 1100mm high, or with anchorage's for sliding safety harnesses;
- (d) provision of access equipment such as suspended cradles or travelling ladders, with attachments for safety harnesses;
- (e) provision of suitable anchorage points for safety harnesses or abseiling hooks;

(f) only in circumstances where other means cannot be used, space for scaffold towers should be provided, and located so that glazed surfaces can be cleaned.





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Please note that these guidance notes are for advice only and may not cover all situations. It is your responsibility to ensure that they are appropriate for use in your particular circumstances.