

FACT SHEET: SECTION 3114 – WINDOW CLEANING SAFETY FEATURES

Supplement to the 2020 Minnesota Building Code

[A supplement to the Minnesota Building Code \(MBC\) became effective Nov. 7, 2025](#), that requires windows to be provided with a safe window cleaning method in accordance with ANSI/IWCA I-14.1 — 2001, the industry standard for professional window cleaners, that identifies accepted safe practices for window cleaning. This supplement replaces the previous requirements for window cleaning anchors and allows for the use of alternative methods.

Where are window cleaning safety features required? Are anchors required?

Windows with glazing less than 38 feet above work surface are to be provided with a safe window cleaning method that complies with ANSI/IWCA I-14.1—2001 (MBC 3114.1).

Windows with glazing that are 38 feet or higher above an associated work surface are required to have either (1) roof anchors, wall anchors or anchor points at structural members for the use of swinging scaffolds, boatswain's chairs or rope descent systems or (2) permanently installed powered platforms (MBC 3114.1.1).

An exception permits the use of a manually propelled mobile scaffold or mobile elevating work platform where the glazing in windows is located 60 feet or less above an associated work surface and directly below a roof that has a slope 4 units vertical in 12 units horizontal or greater (MBC 3114.1.1).

Are anchors required for reroofing projects?

Not automatically. The building must have glazing 38 feet or higher, not be provided with a method for safe window cleaning and be undergoing an alteration that exposes the primary structural frame of the roof (MBC 3114.1.2).

What are anchors?

Engineered permanent attachment points located on the roof, wall or at structural members. The anchors are used for swinging scaffolds, boatswain's chairs and rope descent systems or fall arrest systems and must comply with ANSI/IWCA I-14.1 — 2001 and MBC 3114.3.3; 3114.3.4; and 3114.3.5.

Why are window cleaning safety features required?

State legislation mandates the Minnesota Building Code to include requirements for safe window cleaning. MBC section 3114 provides requirements that allow for safe window cleaning. Dedicated anchors prevent fall hazards by providing secure attachment points for swinging scaffolds, boatswain's (Bosun's) chairs, and rope descent systems or personal fall arrest systems.

Alternate means and methods (Minnesota Rules 1300.0110, subp. 9)

The Minnesota State Building Code allows the use of alternate materials, designs and methods of construction when approved by the building official. A building official may accept an alternate **if it meets or exceeds the level of safety, effectiveness and performance required by Section 3114 and ANSI/IWCA I-14.1 — 2001.**



Pictured at top are boatswain's chairs. Above is a swinging scaffold.

Diagram A: When anchors are required (38' or greater window height above grade plane).

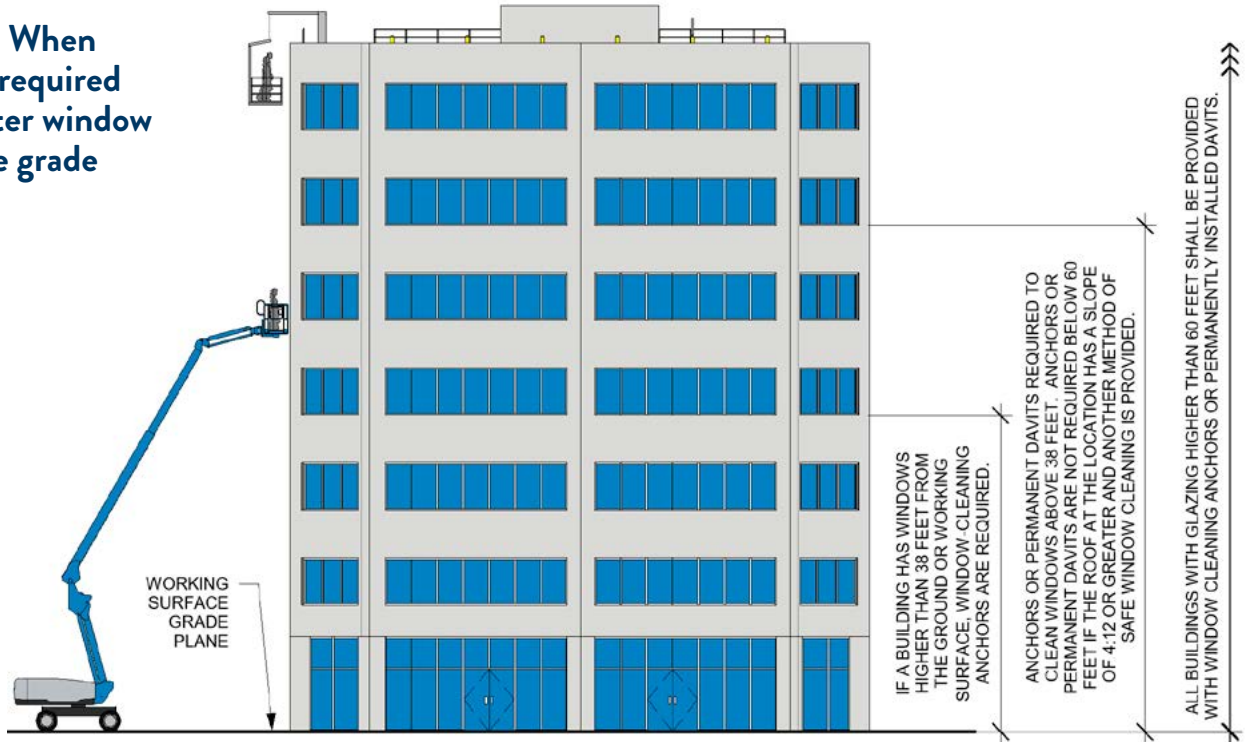
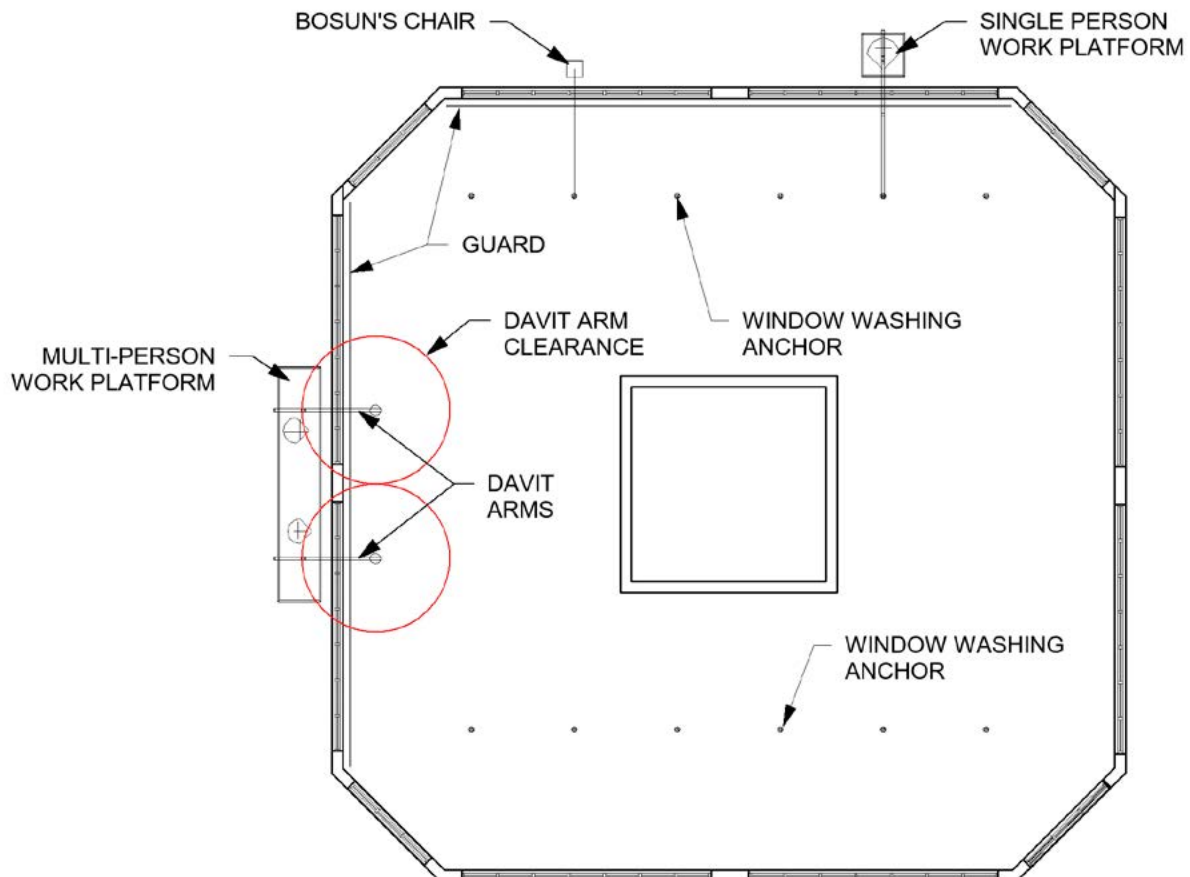
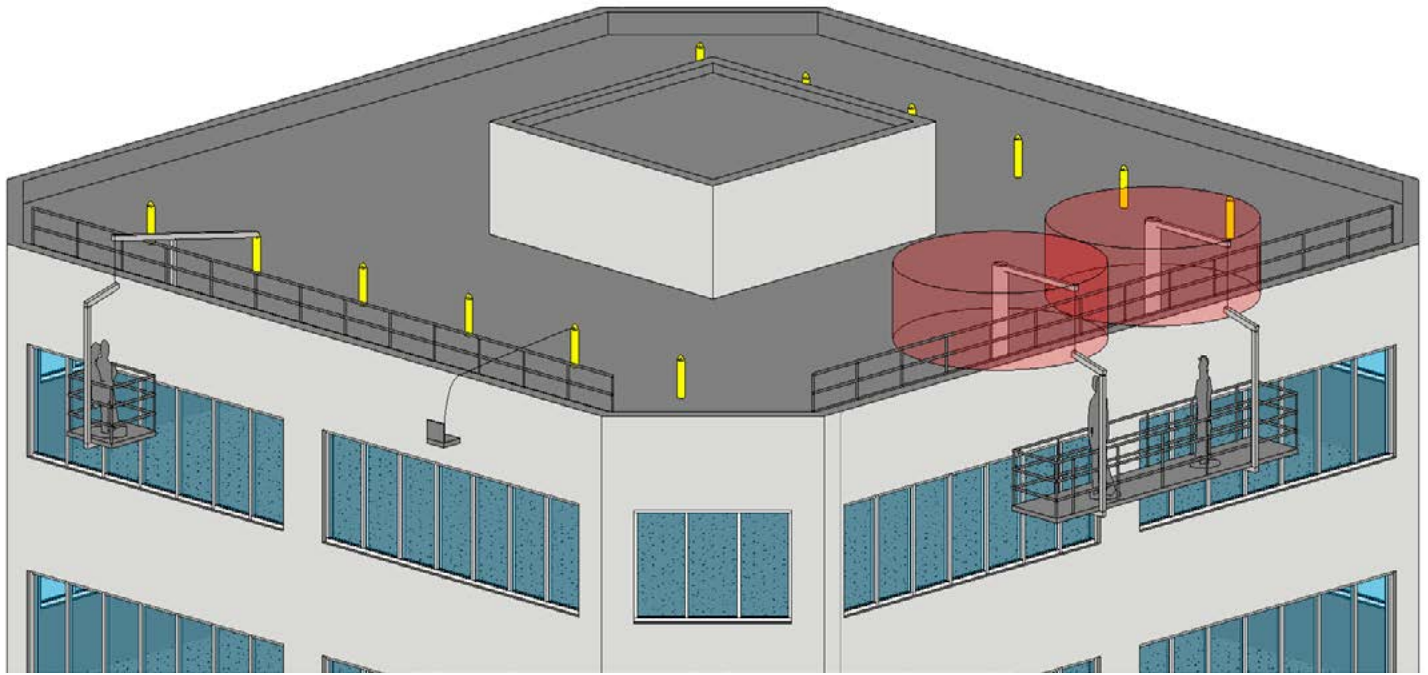


Diagram B: Roof Plan – Typical anchor layout (top-down view)

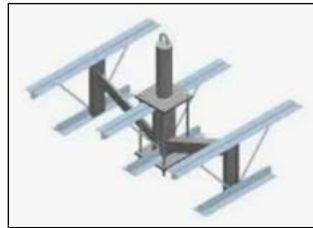
Permanent window-cleaning anchor arranged in rows parallel to roof.





Notes:

- Anchor must be engineered and rated.
- Anchor must be mechanically fastened to structure.
- Testing and certification required per ANSI/ IWCA I-14.1 — 2001.



Inspection and certification

ANSI/IWCA I-14.1 — 2001 requires:

- Initial certification
- Periodic inspections: Owner's responsibility
- Recertification: Owner has qualified individual/firm to verify per standard.

Building officials may request verification that anchors or alternate systems meet applicable provisions.

When Is a licensed designer required?

Licensed engineers or architects must certify anchor systems, permanently install powered platform installations. Alternative designs to required systems must be fully documented and certified by a Minnesota-licensed design professional before they can be approved by the building official.