

BEN SHAFFER RECREATION INC.

PARK, PLAYGROUND & STREETScape SOLUTIONS

NEW JERSEY BLEACHER CODE

At the recent New Jersey Recreation and Park Conference we found a great deal of interest in bleachers, and many questions on code compliance. This can be quite confusing, so we felt it might be helpful to provide you with the information you need in one spot. We encourage you to keep this information for your files.

The New Jersey State Codes page can be found at: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/codes/codreg/>

The information specific to bleachers is found in chapter 10 (means of egress) of the IBC 2009. Although this refers to buildings, this section contains the standards used for bleachers.

In chapter 35, we can find where ICC 300 is referenced. ICC 300 pertains specifically to bleachers. The code states that chapters 2, 3, and 4 only are included as part of the code. The ICC300 is a copyrighted document, so we can only link you to TOC: <http://shop.iccsafe.org/media/wysiwyg/material/9181S12-toc.pdf>

Chapter 4 of the ICC 300 (section 405.1) states that aisles are required in all bleachers except for ones that meet ALL the following requirements:

1. Seats are without backrests.
2. The rise from row to row does not exceed 6 inches(152mm) per row.
3. The row spacing does not exceed 28inches (711mm)unless the seat boards and foot boards are at the same elevation.
4. The number of rows does not exceed 16 rows in height.
5. The first seating board is not more than 12 inches(305mm) above the ground or floor below or across aisle.
6. Seat boards have a continuous flat surface.
7. Seat boards provide a walking surface with a minimum width of 11 inches (279 mm).
8. Egress from seating is not restricted by rails, guards or other obstructions.

In addition to the items listed above, New Jersey also requires bleachers be in full compliance with ADA as addressed by the Access Board. Here is the Access Board text in its entirety: <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/ada-standards/single-file-version#a221>. The information specific to bleachers is found in section 221.

The main points as far as conforming to code here can be found in two sections: Section F221.2.2 – Integration states that wheelchair seats be an “integral part of the seating plan” which means the wheelchair spaces must be located within the footprint of the seating area. Section F221.3 states that at least one companion seat must be provided for EACH wheelchair space.

Some have suggested that marking end seats on each side of a bleacher with fewer than 50 seats as “reserved for WC companion” (or something to that effect), and then providing for clearly marked wheelchair spaces on each side of the bleacher as reserved for persons in wheelchairs would be considered part of the footprint. Since this is a potentially “gray” area, we strongly urge you to have your code official review the codes and determine how to proceed. Code compliance is the responsibility of the purchaser/owner of the equipment.