

Rooflights & regulatory compliance



Regulations for Daylighting

Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 state – “Every workplace shall have suitable and sufficient lighting which shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, be by natural light”. These comments are restated in HSG38 – Lighting at Work.

The most effective method of providing even, consistent daylight, particularly in large buildings, is through rooflighting – up to three times more efficient than windows of a similar area. Diffusing materials should be used wherever possible to provide even light distribution and avoid glare. Wall glazing is less effective and can create internal shadows and dark corners. However it does offer good psychological benefits and must not be ignored.

Rooflights and Thermal Performance - Part L

Independent research has shown that rooflights make a positive contribution to compliance with Part L of the Building Regulations. Full Guidance on use of Rooflights to help meet these requirements is given in NARM document NTD06.2 “Designing with Rooflights - Supporting Part L Building Regulation guidance in England; Approved Documents L1A, L1B, L2A and L2B (2013 editions)”, which is a second tier document referenced from Approved Document L, and approved by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

NARM has also commissioned Elmhurst Energy to undertake analysis into energy savings and emissions reductions resulting from improving daylighting and lighting controls on specific building types. The document entitled “Analysis of Improving Daylighting and Lighting Controls on a Number of Existing Non-Domestic Buildings” can be downloaded here.

Rooflights and Regulations for Non-fragility

When specifying rooflights, designers should consider

carefully the potential to eliminate or reduce known or predictable hazards. The decision on how best to specify rooflights should take account of the risks associated with temporary gaps during construction, and the risks when access to the roof is needed later e.g. during maintenance or cleaning.

As in all building work good safety standards are essential to prevent accidents. In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Construction (Design and Management) or CDM Regulations 2007, the building should now be designed with safety in mind, not only for the construction period but throughout the normal life of the building. This must include considering the safety of people involved in maintenance and repair, and even demolition. It might mean providing permanent access to the roof, walkways and parapets, for example. The HSE document HSG 33 Safety in Roof Work refers specifically to fragile rooflights as an example of a potential hazard to be considered and to be avoided as far as possible.

Construction of the roof is one of the most hazardous operations because of the potential for falls or material dropping onto people below. The roofing contractor must plan and document a safe system of work before starting construction. This must take into account if any of the roof assembly will be fragile until fully fixed. Metal roofing systems together with appropriate rooflights, even after the first fix of lining out, can be designed to be non fragile. However until the systems are fully fixed, both metal and rooflights must be regarded as fragile.

Rooflights and Regulations for Fire

For a summary of the Building Regulations in respect of fire safety & rooflights, please refer to NARM Quickguide 02, which can be downloaded from the narm website: www.narm.org.uk/downloads

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Quickguide 06

Further information

Further information can be obtained from NARM,
(National Association of Rooflight Manufacturers Ltd) at
www.narm.org.uk

