

The image features a background of a rooftop parapet wall with a brick coping and a concrete base. In the distance, a city skyline with various buildings is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The NYC Buildings logo is overlaid in the top left corner.

**NYC**<sup>TM</sup>  
**Buildings**

**CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY:**  
**ANNUAL PARAPET  
INSPECTIONS**

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**AS REQUIRED BY THE NEW  
YORK CITY ADMINISTRATIVE  
CODE AND 1 RCNY 103-15**

## BACKGROUND

As of on January 1, 2024, building owners must have an annual observation of their building parapets performed. This requirement applies to all buildings with parapets fronting the public right-of-way, regardless of height.

### EXCEPTIONS:

1. Fully detached 1- or 2- family homes
2. Buildings with a fence or other continuous barrier preventing access to the exterior wall



Figure 1A is a typical parapet.



Figure 1B is a low parapet that is also subject to annual inspection.

## WHAT IS A PARAPET?

**Parapet:** the part of any wall entirely above the roof line. The images featured in Figures 1A and 1B depict parapets subject to annual inspection. Note, that the definition does not include a minimum or maximum height.



Figure 2 the guardrail is a parapet appurtenance and therefore is subject to annual inspection.



Figure 3 the ladder, ducts, and pipes are all examples of parapet appurtenances subject to annual inspection

## WHAT IS AN APPURTENANCE?

An appurtenance is any structure or element attached to the parapet. All parapet appurtenances, such as light fixtures, antennas, cornices, guardrails, etc. are subject to inspection.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Balcony walls are not considered parapets.** The balconies walls in both buildings in Figures 4A and 4B are not subject to annual parapet inspections.



## WHAT IS A CORNICE?

**Cornice: a projecting horizontal member that crowns a wall.** The photos in Figures 5A and 5B show the front and back views of a cornice without a parapet. It is not subject to parapet inspections. Only cornices that are attached to parapets are subject to inspection.



The photos in Figures 6A and 6B show the interior and exterior view of a cornice attached to a parapet. The building is subject to parapet inspections. The cornice is considered an appurtenance to the parapet. Both the parapet and the cornice must be inspected.

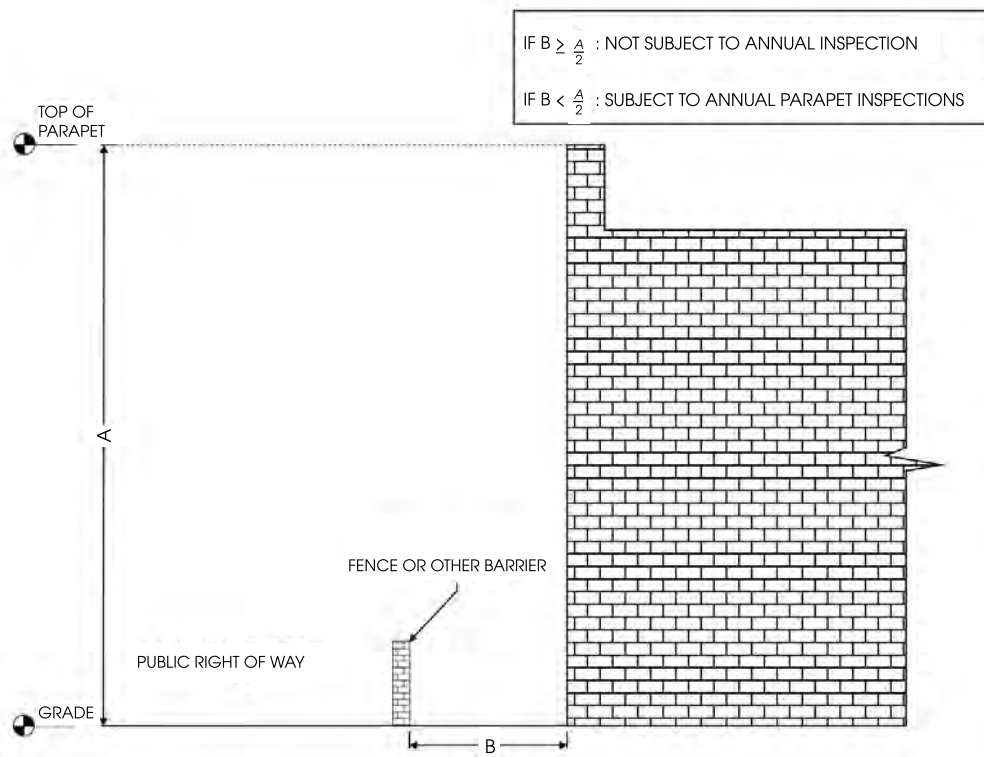


**EXCEPTION 1: Fully detached 1- or 2 family homes.** The building in Figure 7 is a 1-2 family fully detached home, therefore it is exempt from annual parapet inspections, while the buildings in Figure 8, also 1-2 family homes, are partially attached and therefore are subject to annual parapet inspections.



**EXCEPTION 2: Buildings with a continuous fence or other barrier preventing access to the exterior wall.**

For a parapet to be exempt from annual inspection, the perpendicular distance from the parapet wall to the fence or other barrier must be at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  the height of the wall, as measured from grade to the top of the parapet.



**FIGURE 9**

Building A in Figure 10 is exempt from annual parapet inspections based on above diagram, while the building B does not qualify for this exemption.



**FIGURE 10**

## WHO CAN PERFORM THE OBSERVATION?

Parapet observations must be performed annually by a person who is competent to inspect parapets. Including, but not limited to a bricklayer, building superintendent, handyman, mason or a person in a similar construction-related trade, architect, engineer, an inspector working for a New York State-authorized insurance company, a New York State-authorized building inspector, etc.

## HOW DO YOU FILE A PARAPET REPORT?

- Parapet inspection reports are not filed with the DOB. Owners must maintain the observation reports for at least six (6) years and must make such reports available to the Department upon request.
- Owners must have their annual parapet reports available by **December 31** each year and be ready to present it to the DOB if requested.
- Failure to present the report upon request will result in a violation. No civil penalties are applicable.
- Owners are required to maintain parapet reports on file for at least 6 years.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOUR PARAPET IS UNSAFE?

- Notify DOB by calling 311
- Owner must immediately install public protection (shed, fence, netting, etc.) as required to protect the public until correct the unsafe condition.
- Unsafe conditions must be corrected within 90 days and public protection must remain until all unsafe conditions are corrected.

## HELPFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

- For additional information on annual parapet inspections please review **1 RCNY 103-15** ([https://www.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/rules/1\\_RCNY\\_103-15.pdf](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/rules/1_RCNY_103-15.pdf))
- Visit the **Department's Parapets page** (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/buildings/safety/parapets.page>)
- Get answers to the most **frequently asked parapet inspection questions** (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/buildings/safety/parapets-frequently-asked-questions.page>)
- Email your parapet inspections questions to [parapets@buildings.nyc.gov](mailto:parapets@buildings.nyc.gov).