



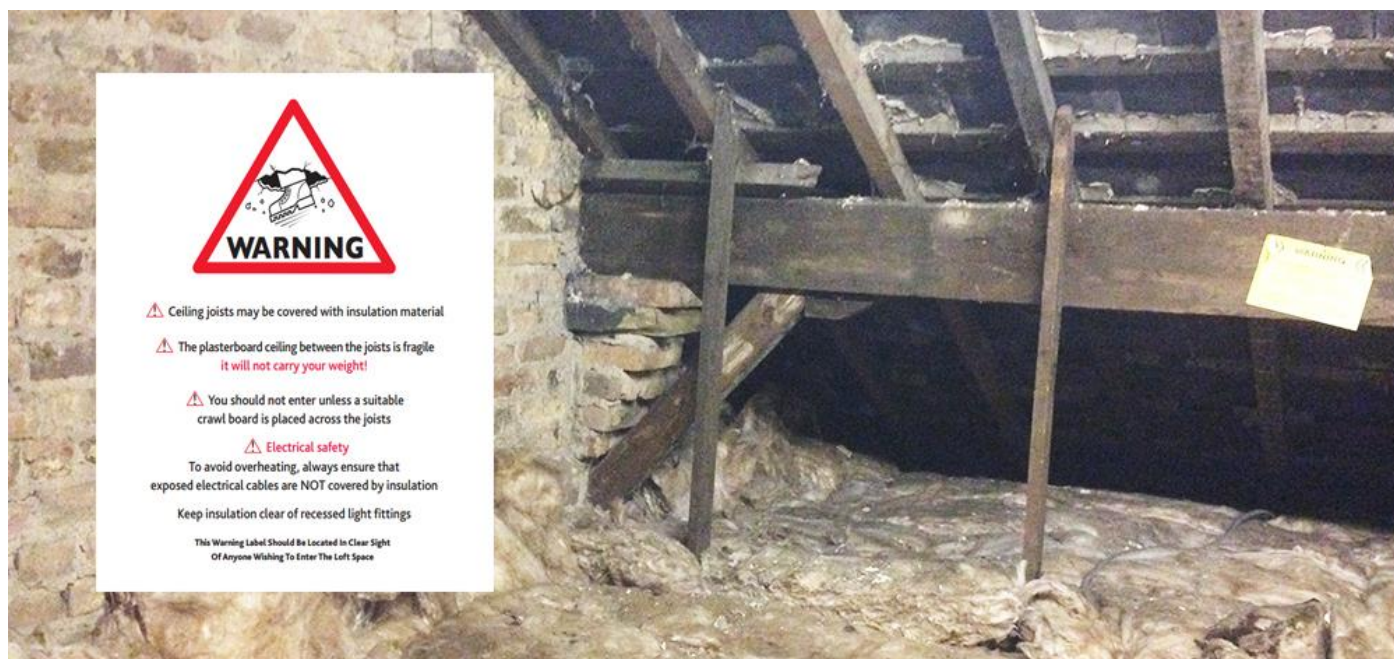
LOFT BOARDING

NORTH WEST LOFT STORAGE SOLUTIONS

WE TURN EMPTY LOFTS INTO USEABLE STORAGE SPACE
RAISED SUB-FRAMES - BOARDING - LADDERS - HATCHES - LIGHTS - LOFT ROOMS

NORTHWEST REGIONAL NUMBER 01254 370073 - FREE 0800 8799967

SAFETY IN LOFTS – SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS & COMPLYING WITH LEGISLATION



Working in a loft space counts as Working at Height according to the Working at Height Safety Directive, especially if there is a stairwell below, with a large distance to fall.

It's so easy to think that because a ceiling is not made of glass and cannot be seen through, it gives the illusion we are quite safe up there, and over confidence can cause accidents. But if you could see through the ceiling you would be far more cautious when taking step across the joists.

I have worked in the maintenance industry for 30 years working in many loft spaces and have seen and witnessed accidents happen through workmen / staff being over confident and not using any floor protection. My company (Loft Boarding NW) specialise in this area and my staff are thoroughly trained in working in loft spaces (Working at Height) to avoid such accidents. We help provide our customers with safe loft access & working platforms and advise on the correct way and method of using this access.



Loft joists are normally spaced around 600mm (2ft) apart and are only around 40 – 50mm in thickness. Also most modern lofts or upgraded lofts are topped up with new insulation that conceals the ceiling joists. This makes it even more difficult to get a good footing when striding across a loft space. This just adds to the problem, as one slip will leave you standing on a 12.5mm thin plasterboard sheet, which will give way under anyone's weight and guaranteed to go right through it.



Loft Boarding NW Ltd Unit 14 Junction 7 Business Park Blackburn Rd Accrington BB5 5JW
t: 01254 370073 w: www.loft-boarding-nw.co.uk.co.uk
e: enquiries@loft-boarding-nw.co.uk Company Reg No. 09990655





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As technology changes and new devices & systems are developed to help run our homes & businesses more efficiently, so increases the need for safety legislation changes and for businesses and organisation to comply with these new changes.

A loft space is an ideal location to install pretty much anything a building could need to function and be out of the way. It's no longer just for pipes and cables. So today landlords, home owners and business owners are increasingly finding the need to send maintenance staff in to loft spaces to gain access to this equipment, such like:

- Boilers
- Cold water storage tanks
- Hot water cylinders
- Shower pumps
- Extraction fans
- Ventilation units
- Domestic sprinkler system
- Smoke detectors
- Security alarm systems
- Warden call
- Power & Data cables
- Pipework
- TV / Satellite systems and audio speakers
- Solar PV inverters
- Solar hot water (pipework and expansion chambers)



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SAFETY IN LOFTS – SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

With this increased demand for loft area maintenance access it is required that commercial building owners or tenants must provide a safe accessible working area for maintenance staff to use to allow them to do their job in accordance with Health and Safety legislation and Working at Height Safety Directive.

Suggested requirements are as follows:

- A suitable loft hatch / opening must be provided of regulation size (726mm x 566mm) to allow a person and a secured ladder to pass through without any obstruction
- A strong purpose built stow away aluminium ladders must be fixed in place with lockable sections when pulled down to use.
- A safety rail must be provided to surround the hatch to protect anyone falling down the loft opening from inside the loft by walking backwards or stumbling towards the opening.
- A secure purpose built platform must be provided to allow a safe walkway and to surround the apparatus / equipment to be maintained. Several working areas can be provided which are accessed off the main walkway.
- Adequate fixed lighting must be installed correctly and be installed in accordance with IEE wiring regulations and comply with building regulation Part P (The light must be fixed and a switch must be placed in a safe but easy to reach location from the loft opening)



The walkway / boarding must be constructed by using a raised sub-frame system to avoid compression of any existing loft insulation. Any insulation compression will diminish the effectiveness of the insulation considerably.





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SAFETY IN LOFTS – SOLUTIONS

To comply there is quite a straight forward solution which we can implement in any loft space in any building so you can conform to these requirements quickly and cost effectively.

Loft boarding is no longer just a DIY job, it's becoming increasingly popular for storage to, and as a result of this increased demand for storage space so must be an increased demand for the safety in domestic as well commercial loft spaces.

A loft storage space must be installed correctly and without compromising any existing regulations, not just for health and safety purposes but for building regulations purposes as well.

A huge emphasis must be put on avoiding loft insulation compression as it is a fact that some installers will compromise or remove insulation just to provide safe flooring for access for storage.

Compressing loft insulation or removing it will not only increase your heating bills it is completely unnecessary as there is a unique system called LoftZone Raised Loft Floor (more information below on this product) which allows the installation of a raised floor (270mm high) to be installed above your insulation.

At Loft Boarding NW we can use various systems to allow you to have installed a safe working platform for maintenance access without compromising existing loft insulation, pipe work or electrical cables.

We achieve this by using either a wooden 100mm sub-frame installed across the existing joists or our highly recommended system of the unique 270mm LoftZone Raise Loft floor system which uses a combination of metal beams, tri-supports and uni-support legs.



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