

**NFPA<sup>®</sup>**

# 418

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Standard for Heliports

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**2021**



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## NFPA® 418

### Standard for

## Heliports

### 2021 Edition

This edition of NFPA 418, *Standard for Heliports*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Helicopter Facilities. It was issued by the Standards Council on October 5, 2020, with an effective date of October 25, 2020, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 418 was approved as an American National Standard on October 25, 2020.

### Origin and Development of NFPA 418

The development of NFPA 418 began in 1965 after the NFPA Sectional Committee on Aircraft Hangars and Airport Facilities was asked to provide guidance on the construction and protection of elevated heliports. Earlier work had been done by the NFPA Sectional Committee on Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting with regard to fire protection in the event of accidents during flight operations, and the NFPA Sectional Committee on Aircraft Fuel Servicing developed the safeguards needed for the prevention of fire accidents during fueling operations at such locations.

In 1967, a *Tentative Standard on Elevated Heliport Construction and Protection* was approved at the NFPA Annual Meeting. The 1968 edition was a revision of the tentative standard, including a change in title, and the 1973 edition was a complete revision of the 1968 edition. The 1979 edition contained further amendments. The 1990 edition added chapters for land-based facilities and offshore heliports, and the title was changed from *Standard on Rooftop Heliport Construction and Protection* to *Standard for Heliports*.

The standard was revised for the 1995 edition, and criteria for rooftop helicopter hangars were added for the 2001 edition. The 2006 edition was a partial revision.

The 2011 edition revised the requirements for means of egress, fuel equipment locations, and suppression system design and testing, and a requirement for emergency response planning was added. Those changes were intended to address problems that had contributed to recent helipad fires.

For the 2016 edition, the committee wanted to build on the improvements in the previous edition. A retroactivity clause was added to provide a means for ensuring the safety of existing heliports without requiring full compliance. New criteria for determining noncombustibility of helipad materials were incorporated. The authority having jurisdiction was required to approve the emergency response plan, to ensure that the plan is coordinated with first responders.

The committee also reorganized the section on fire protection for rooftop heliports for clarity while addressing the following technical issues:

- (1) The foam discharge duration was increased from 5 minutes to 10 minutes to better align with other standards and to allow additional time for first responders to reach the rooftop heliport.
- (2) Signs to identify the foam system activation stations were required to ensure that personnel are able to locate and identify the correct pull station in an emergency.
- (3) The foam system shutoff controls were required to be located where they would be accessible during a fire on the helipad.

In addition, the committee assigned two task groups: the first to further study the implications of requiring compliance with the latest edition of FAA AC 150/5390, and the second to review the requirements for portable extinguishers. Following the task groups' reports, the committee reaffirmed the existing requirements.

For the 2021 edition, the technical committee made three significant revisions. First, several foam requirements were changed in Chapter 5, including the duration of foam discharge for hose line systems from 2 minutes to 10 minutes. In addition, a new requirement in Chapter 5 allows for manual firefighting equipment, as approved by the authority having jurisdiction. Finally, a new reserved Chapter 11, Vertiports and Vertistops, has been added. The technical committee will request public input and public comments during the next revision cycle to help create the specific requirements for electric/hybrid aircraft.