

## ROOFTOP GARDENS AND LANDSCAPED ROOFS



**FIGURE 3-10** This grass-covered roof provides a park-like area for recreation.

Planting vegetation on building rooftops is becoming a common occurrence. The vegetation provides several functions. It provides a pleasing area for recreational activities or meetings, as well as a significant level of thermal insulation for the building (Figure 3-10). The vegetation also creates several concerns for the inspector and fire fighter. Roof ventilation is no longer a viable solution when the roof is covered with several feet of soil, and dying or dead vegetation creates a fire hazard.

The IFC regulates rooftop gardens and landscaped roofs. The landscaped portion of the roof is limited in size to a maximum area of 15,625 square feet with a maximum dimension of 125 feet. The limitation on size

provides a fire break and a location for roof ventilation. Additional landscaped areas can be provided as long as they are separated by a distance of not less than 6 feet. This separation must consist of a Class A-rated roof system (Figure 3-11). IFC Section 905.3.8 requires that when a standpipe is installed in the building, it must be usable and available for the landscaped roof. [\[Ref. 317.3, 905.3.8\]](#)

A landscape maintenance plan can be required that would include trimming of trees and shrubs, watering schedule and a list of vegetation species. The plan should provide for the removal of dead and decaying material at least twice a year. [\[Ref. 317.4\]](#)



**FIGURE 3-11** Landscaping on the roof must be maintained in a safe condition and allow fire-fighting access.