

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Chapter 17-09  
Rules and Regulations of the  
Department of Development and Environmental Services

**Fire Apparatus Access Road Requirements for Roadways Based on Width**

(K.C.C. 17.04.200, 17.04.220, 17.04.270)

**Adoption Date: March 11, 2009**

**Effective Date: April 16, 2009**

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**17-09-010 Definitions.**

A. Department. The Department of Development and Environmental Services of King County.

B. Fire Marshal. The King County Fire Marshal.

C. Fire Apparatus. A vehicle such as a fire pumper, aerial ladder truck, elevated platform, rescue squad or similar firefighting or rescue equipment.

D. Fire Apparatus Road. As defined in IFC 502.1, a road that provides fire apparatus access from a fire station to a facility, building or portion thereof. This is a general term inclusive of all other terms such as fire lane, public street, private street, parking lot lane and access roadway. This is further described in IFC 503 as modified by KCC 17.04.370 through 17.04.420.

E. Fire Lane. The area within any public right-of-way, easement or private property designated for permitting fire trucks and other fire fighting or emergency equipment to use, travel upon and park.

F. Life safety/rescue access. An unobstructed access to all floor levels and each roof level of a building on not less than twenty percent of the building perimeter by utilizing a thirty-five foot ladder. An alternate method would be at least one stairway enclosure with exit doorways from each floor level and with a door opening onto each roof level which conforms to the requirements of the International Building Code.

G. Parking Management Plan. A system of providing parking locations, offset driveways, hydrant locations and posting of fire lanes that provides an unobstructed 20-foot fire apparatus access roadway to all structures on a street.

**17-09-020 Purpose.** It is the purpose of these rules to implement design standards for alternative fire apparatus access to allow subdivisions within the urban

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growth area to meet King County Comprehensive Plan goals for urban density, reduced impervious surfaces, and low impact development.

**17-09-030 Authority.**

**A. K.C.C. 17.04.200 General authority and responsibilities - General.**

Section 104.1 of the International Fire Code is not adopted and the following is substituted:

**General (IFC 104.1).** The Fire Marshal is authorized to render interpretations of this code and make and enforce such rules and regulations, pursuant to the provisions of K.C.C. chapter 2.98, for the prevention and control of fires and fire hazards as necessary to carry out the application and the intent of this code, including but not limited to:

1. Procedures to assure that building permits for structures shall conform to the requirements of this code.
2. Procedures to assure that applicable standards of this code shall be reviewed as part of the subdivision, short subdivision, urban planned development, rezone, conditional use, special use, site development permit, binding site plan and building permit processes.
3. Procedures to assure that the standard known as NFPA 13R shall be applied as a minimum standard to all R Occupancies.
4. Procedures to allow for relaxation of the hydrant spacing requirements by as much as 50% pursuant to K.C.C. chapter 17.08, except when such allowances would unreasonably reduce fire protection to the area or structures served.
5. A minimum of one certified copy or the number required by governing law of such rules and regulations shall be filed with the clerk of the council and shall be in effect immediately thereafter and additional copies shall be kept in the King County Fire Marshal's Office for distribution to the public.

**B. K.C.C. 17.04.220 General authority and responsibilities - General - Additional conditions.** Section 104.1 of the International Fire code is supplemented with the following:

**Additional conditions (IFC 104.1.2).** The Fire Marshal or his/her designee retains the authority to impose additional conditions, including but not limited to increased setbacks, use of fire retardant materials, installation of fire sprinkler systems, automatic fire suppression systems, automatic fire detection systems or standpipes where determined necessary to mitigate identified fire protection impacts.

**C. IFC 104.8 Modifications.** Whenever there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provisions of this code, the fire code official shall have the authority to grant modifications for individual cases, provided the fire code official shall first find that special individual reason makes the strict letter of this code impractical and the modification is in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code and that such

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modification does not lessen health, life and fire safety requirements. The details of action granting modifications shall be recorded and entered in the files of the department of fire prevention.

**D. K.C.C. 17.04.270 General authority and responsibilities - Modifications - Deviations.** Section 104.8 of the International Fire Code is supplemented with the following:

**Deviations (IFC 104.8.1).** The Fire Marshal or his/her designee shall have the authority to consider deviations from the standards established for life safety/rescue access, fire detection systems and fire sprinkler systems.

1. If the Fire Marshal finds that the deviation would not unreasonably reduce fire protection to the area or structures served, and determines that the deviation should be approved, the Fire Marshal shall notify the fire chief of the applicable fire district of the deviation request. The Fire Marshal may approve the deviation if the fire chief of the applicable fire district either concurs in writing with the Fire Marshal or does not respond in writing within seven working days after notification of the deviation request. The fire district chief's lack of response shall be taken as an indication that the fire chief concurs with the Fire Marshal's finding.

2. If a response is received within seven days which is not in accordance with the opinion of the director of the department of development and environmental services or his/her designee, the issue shall be submitted to the King County fire code appeals board.

**17-09-040 Fire Access Apparatus Requirements.**

In urban subdivisions or short subdivisions, the fire marshal may allow a modification of the fire apparatus access requirements in KCC 17.04.370 through 17.04.420 to provide a 20-foot unobstructed access as follows:

A. For dwelling units accessed by a roadway less than thirty-six feet in width, if the fire marshal approves a parking management plan that applies to that roadway; and

B. Fire Lane restrictions may be applied if approved by the Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal may require fire lanes on any street and require the placement of "Fire Lane" signs every fifty feet on private tracts, easements or public right-of-way.

**17-09-050 Parking Management Plans.** A Parking Management Plan is subject to the fire code requirements of K.C.C.17.04.370 through 17.04.420 and must be approved by the Fire Marshal. The plan shall consist of one or more of the following components:

A. Show street layout with opposing driveway, mailbox and hydrant locations that would restrict parking and allows twenty foot unobstructed corridor;

B. Provide parking locations that create one additional parking space for each unit;

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C. Show that building density along the street frontage is no greater than R-4 zoning with lots that are sixty feet wide or more; and

D. Provide Fire Lanes as designated by the Fire Marshal posted and maintained as required by K.C.C.17.04.420.

1. Signage dimensions and material specifications shall comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The homeowners association shall be responsible for monitoring and inspecting parking compliance and signage on a regular basis. DDES shall review and approve the relevant homeowner association covenants, conditions and restrictions language. A note referencing this requirement shall be recorded on the final plat.

2. Appropriate provisions shall be made for maintenance of the fire lane signage, sign reflectivity and/or other markings by the homeowner’s association, subject to approval and monitoring by the Fire Marshal pursuant to KCC 17.04.420.

3. An easement of adequate dimension to allow for sign placement and maintenance shall be established parallel and adjacent to the right-of-way for the benefit of the homeowners association. Failure to privately maintain the signage and enforce parking restrictions may result in code enforcement action in accordance with King County Code Titles 17 and 23 or similar provisions for successor agencies.

**17-09-060 Severability.** If a provision of the rules contained herein or its applicability to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the provisions of these rules or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.