



# Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department Office of the Fire Marshal

1225 Courthouse Road, PO BOX 339, Stafford, VA 22555  
(540) 658-7200 · FAX (540) 658-4545 · [www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm](http://www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm)



## Guidelines and Specifications for: Fire Department Access

### Applicable Codes and Standards:

VSFPC – Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (2006)  
IFC – International Fire Code (2006) Appendix D  
SCC – Stafford County Code

Fire Department Access Roads	Code Section
Fire Department access roads must be provided on properties as approved. Fire Department access roads are also required on <b>construction and demolition</b> sites.	VSFPC 503.1 SCC 12-22
Fire Department access roads must be provided within <b>150 ft of all portions of any building or facility.</b>	VSFPC 503.1.1
Fire Department access roads must have an <b>unobstructed width of 20 ft</b> , a vertical clearance of 13.5 ft, grade not exceeding 10%, and capable supporting a 70,000 lb fire apparatus during <b>all weather conditions.</b>	VSFPC 503.2
Fire Department access roads must be provided with an approved turn-around area where a <b>dead-end condition exceeds 150 ft.</b>	VSFPC 503.2.5
<b>Approved apparatus turn-around areas</b> must provide at least a <b>90 ft diameter</b> cul-de-sac or an approved “T”, “Y” or other approved arrangement. See IFC D103.3	VSFPC 503.2.4
<p>The diagrams illustrate four types of approved apparatus turn-around areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>96' DIAMETER CUL-DE-SAC:</b> A circular cul-de-sac with a diameter of 96 feet and a 28-foot typical radius (28' R TYP').</li> <li><b>60' "Y":</b> A Y-shaped junction with a 60-foot radius (60' R) and a 26-foot typical radius (26' R TYP').</li> <li><b>120' HAMMERHEAD:</b> A T-junction with a 120-foot radius (120' R) and a 28-foot typical radius (28' R TYP').</li> <li><b>ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO 120' HAMMERHEAD:</b> A T-junction with a 70-foot radius (70' R) and a 28-foot typical radius (28' R TYP').</li> </ul>	
Building or facilities <b>greater than 3 stories or 30 feet</b> in height above the lowest level of fire department access must be provided with <b>“aerial fire apparatus access”</b> per IFC D105. <b>Fire Department access roadways must be provided with a minimum of 15 ft and a maximum of 30 feet from the building along the Front AND Rear (or largest two where approved) sides of a building.</b>	VSFPC 503.1.2 IFC D105
Gates or barriers across Fire Department access roads must be provided with <b>“Knox Gate Switches”</b> or other approved access and at least 12 ft in width.	VSFPC 503.6
Fire Department access roads must be marked in accordance with <b>Stafford County Fire Lane Sign and Pavement Marking Standards.</b> Grass pavers or other hidden Fire Department access roads must be clearly delineated with approved objects with access points that are marked as fire lanes and unobstructed.	VSFPC 503.3



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<b>Rapid Access “Knox Box” Key Box</b>	<b>Code Section</b>
Where access is restricted for emergency operations, the fire official may require the installation of a key box. New buildings equipped with a fire alarm system are required to have a key box. For large or high hazard buildings, a larger repository box may be required. See <a href="http://www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm">www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm</a> for ordering information.	VSFPC 506.1
Where required, the key box must be installed at the primary fire department entrance (main entrance or sprinkler room if multiple main entrances exist). The box should be securely mounted in a visible location at about 4 ft from grade.	VSFPC 506.1
The <b>contents of a key box</b> must include the following items and <b>LABELED</b> keys (high-rise buildings must have at least 5 sets): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) a master key (preferably at least 3 for multistory buildings)</li> <li>2) fire alarm system keys</li> <li>3) elevator keys for firefighter operations (preferably also a door drop key)</li> <li>4) any other keys to emergency equipment or areas</li> <li>5) emergency contact information</li> </ol>	VSFPC 506.1
Where emergency <b>gate access</b> is secured, a “Knox Gate Switch” must be provided.	VSFPC 503.6
It is the building tenant or owner’s responsibility to update the contents of the key box when information is outdated or locks are changed/re-keyed.	VSFPC 506.2

<b>Address and Other Exterior Building Access and Signs</b>	<b>Code Section</b>
New and existing buildings must be marked with approved address numbers or identification that is <b>attached to the front of the building and visible from the street</b> . Additional signage at the street may be required if the building address is not visible. Building address or identifications must be <b>at least 4” in height</b> (6” per VUSBC for new buildings) and permanently mounted on a <b>contrasting background</b> .	VSFPC 505.1
<b>Multiple tenant buildings</b> such as strip-shopping centers must have the <b>rear door</b> marked with the building and/or suite address in addition to the front address. Also, <b>doors that are non-functional</b> must be marked as “NO ACCESS” from the exterior.	VSFPC 504.1 SCC 12-23
Where a <b>fire department connection</b> is provided, an approved FDC sign is required. See the “Stafford County FDC Sign” detail for requirements.	VSFPC 912.4
Where exterior access is provided to sprinkler rooms or other fire protection system components, approved “ <b>SPRINKLER ROOM</b> ”, “ <b>FIRE PUMP ROOM</b> ”, or “ <b>FIRE PUMP TEST HEADER</b> ” signs are required. Letters should be at least <b>4” in height</b> and <b>white on a red background</b> .	VSFPC 510.1

<b>Stairwell, Evacuation Plan, and Other Interior Access and Signs</b>	<b>Code Section</b>
Buildings four or more stories in height shall be provided with a stairway to the roof.	VSFPC 504.3
Buildings four or more stories in height must have <b>signs in each stairwell at each floor landing</b> that identify: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Current floor level</li> <li>2) Stairwell Identification</li> <li>3) Level of exit discharge</li> <li>4) “Roof Access” or “No Roof Access”</li> </ol>	VSFPC 1020.1.6
Group A, B, E, H, I, M, R-1, R-2, R-4, high-rise and other special occupancy buildings should be provided with <b>fire safety and evacuation plans</b> that illustrate a floor plan (with current location), exits, stairs, elevators, fire hose valve connections and fire extinguishers. The signs should be permanently mounted <b>outside each stairwell and lobby on each floor</b> .	VSFPC 404.1
Doors to fire, mechanical or other equipment rooms must be permanently labeled.	VSFPC 510.1