

CODE CLARIFICATION

Date Issued:	October 17, 2001	CC#	01-03
Topic:	Fire Apparatus Access to Buildings		
Code Section(s):	RFC Section 902		
Requested By:	Ron Phillips, Supervising Fire Inspector		

Question No. 1:

RFC Section 902 sets forth minimum fire department access road requirements. Is it the intent of this code section to require all <u>potential</u> roads leading to a building to meet the minimum requirements for turning radius, width and construction? Within a commercial shopping center complex, there are multiple potential access drive aisles to buildings. Some of these potential access roads would indirectly go to the building, but would meander through parking lot areas prior to the building.

Answer:

It is important to provide as much flexibility as possible in access design for the firefighters. As the Fire Code is not specific as to what portions of a driveway system need to meet Fire Code requirements, it is reasonable to determine our own access needs as a local authority having jurisdiction. From a fireground operations perspective it is necessary to design all entrances and main drive aisles within commercial complex (retail or business) to comply with the fire lane provisions of the Fire Code. The smaller individual drive aisles do not need to be identified or designed as fire lanes.

Question No. 2:

RFC Section 902.2.1 states that fire apparatus access shall be provided within 150-feet of any portion of a facility or any portion of an exterior wall of the first story of a building. Is it the intent of this code section to limit the placement of fire apparatus on major arterial roads such as Sunrise Avenue, Douglas Boulevard and Foothills Boulevard, when measuring the approved route around the building?

Answer:

Yes. RFC Section 902.2.1 requires that this access be measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building or facility. Apparatus placement is an important factor in a successful fireground operation. Major arterial roadways, such as those listed above, pose a safety hazard for firefighters. It is best to park the apparatus off the street so firefighting personnel do not have to compete with traffic as they move around the engine or truck. The only exception would be if a bus turnout or turn lane is provided so the apparatus can be parked safely.



CODE CLARIFICATION

Question No. 3:

RFC Section 902.2.1, Exception 1 states that when buildings are completely protected with an approved automatic fire sprinkler system, the chief may modify the provisions of the code. Is it the intent of the code to allow this exception to be used when the building is required under another local code requirement to be protected by a fire sprinkler system? Is it the intent of the code exception to grant a minimum additional distance along the exterior route by the chief? Does the department extend the travel distance to 300-feet total to coincide with the standard 1 3/4" hose line preconnect carried by all department fire apparatus when this exception is utilized?

Answer:

Exception 1 of this section may be used regardless of the reason for installing a fire sprinkler system. Each project shall be judged on its own unique circumstances. As a rule we should strive to obtain access to within 150-feet of any portion of a facility or any portion of an exterior wall of the first story of a building. When a proposed building is <u>fully protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system</u> the department's equipment and operational standards may be taken into consideration. It is appropriate to consider the maximum length of 1 ¾" preconnect hose line carried on an engine, which Roseville Fire Department's case is 300 feet. If deemed acceptable, the distance may be increased to <u>not more than</u> 250 feet. This allows firefighting personnel to extend a preconnect hose line 250 feet and the remaining 50 feet of hose line to accommodate maneuvering around ground level obstacles.

For Further Clarification:	Dennis M. Mathisen, Division Chief/Fire Marshal
Approved By:	Dennis M. Mathisen, Division Chief/Fire Marshal