

# All-Weather Fire Apparatus Access for Construction

Per the adopted 2018 International Fire Code, all construction sites shall have approved all-weather surface. This may be temporary or permanent depending on available roads and construction and a jurisdiction's requirement for all-weather. The relevant code sections are:

**3310.1 Required access.** *Approved* vehicle access for firefighting shall be provided to all construction or demolition sites. Vehicle access shall be provided to within 100 feet of temporary or permanent fire department connections. Vehicle access shall be provided by either temporary or permanent roads, capable of supporting vehicle loading under all weather conditions. Vehicle access shall be maintained until permanent fire apparatus access roads are available.

**503.2.3 Surface.** Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capabilities.

While water may be delayed until the arrival of combustible materials, access must be provided for fire response, which also includes emergency medical and rescue and any special operation. Until approved access is provided, building permits cannot be issued for work to begin on the site.

Asphalt is the preferred all-weather access; however, a temporary access meeting the below requirements may be approved prior to the issuance of building permits:

- Plans shall be submitted and approved prior to installation;
- Design gross vehicle weight is 75,000 pounds;
- Minimum width of the drivable surface is twenty (20) feet;
- Eight (8) inches of compacted ABC or compacted decomposed granite over a prepared subgrade with retainer curbs shall be used;
- Subgrade shall be compacted to 95% density;
- ABC or decomposed granite shall be placed and compacted in two (2) lifts of four (4) inches each, to 95% density;
- Retainer curbs shall be four (4) inches wide by eight (8) inches deep, using 2,500 PSI concrete;

- Top of curb shall be at finished grade; and
- After installation, a compaction test will be required at random locations every 50 feet. A compaction report shall be provided to the fire department prior to final approval.

NOTE: The above options are required as minimums to assure all-weather access for fire equipment on a limited use basis.

The holding of building permits is a policy that is a result of the interpreted requirement of the adopted building and fire codes, which is to establish the minimum requirements to provide a reasonable level of safety, public health, and general welfare through structural strength, *means of egress* facilities ... and safety to life and property from fire, explosion, and other hazards, and to provide a reasonable level of safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.