

California Title 14 Fire Safe Regulations

California Code of Regulations, Title 14 - State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations

Purpose. This handout provides an overview of the State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations adopted under Public Resources Code Sections 4290 and 4291. These rules address access, road and driveway design, signing, emergency water, building siting and wildfire-related development features.

1. Applicability

Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2 applies to development within the geographic and project scope established by the regulations. Applicability is not determined solely by a mailing address or the fact that a property is rural. The project location, fire-hazard responsibility area, type of development and local implementation must be evaluated.

Local jurisdictions may also have standards that are more restrictive. Where the California Fire Code or another adopted local standard is more restrictive, the more restrictive applicable requirement can control.

Code reference: 14 CCR §§1270.00-1270.08; Public Resources Code §§4290-4291

2. Road and Driveway Widths

The Fire Safe Regulations distinguish roads, one-way roads and driveways. These dimensions are State Minimum Fire Safe standards and do not replace wider CFC fire apparatus access requirements where those requirements apply.

Code reference: 14 CCR §1273.01

Feature	Minimum requirement
Two-way road	Two 10-foot traffic lanes, excluding shoulders/stripping
One-way road	One 12-foot traffic lane; additional limitations apply
Driveway	One 10-foot traffic lane
Driveway horizontal clearance	14 feet unobstructed
Driveway vertical clearance	13 feet 6 inches unobstructed

3. Grades, Turnouts and Turnarounds

- Road and driveway grade may not exceed 16 percent as the standard maximum.
- Grade can be approved above 16 percent, but not above 20 percent, when the local jurisdiction approves mitigations that provide the required Same Practical Effect.
- Driveways longer than 150 feet but less than 800 feet require a turnout near the midpoint.
- Driveways longer than 800 feet require turnouts spaced not more than 400 feet apart.
- Turnarounds are required on driveways and dead-end roads. The minimum turnaround turning radius is 40 feet, excluding parking; a hammerhead/T alternative requires a 60-foot top.
- A driveway longer than 300 feet requires a turnaround within 50 feet of the building.

Code reference: 14 CCR §§1273.03 and 1273.05

4. Gate Entrances

- Gate opening must be at least 2 feet wider than the traffic lane or lanes serving the gate.
- Minimum unobstructed gate width is 14 feet and minimum unobstructed vertical clearance is 13 feet 6 inches.
- A gate between a road and driveway must be located at least 30 feet from the roadway and must permit a vehicle to stop without obstructing traffic on the road.
- A one-way single-lane road approaching a gated entrance requires a 40-foot turning radius.
- Security gates require approval and an approved emergency-operation method that remains operational.

Code reference: 14 CCR §1273.09

5. Road Signs and Building Addresses

- Required road signs must be visible and legible for approaching traffic and must identify access limitations such as dead ends, one-way roads or clearance restrictions where applicable.
- Addresses must be permanently posted, plainly legible and visible from the road fronting the property.
- When a private road prevents the building address from being visible from the public way, an unobstructed sign or other visible identification is required at the public way.
- Addresses along one-way roads must be visible from both directions. Multiple addresses at one driveway are mounted on one sign or post.
- Residential building addresses are reflectorized under the Fire Safe Regulations. Addressing must be posted at the beginning of construction and maintained thereafter.

Code reference: 14 CCR §§1274.01-1274.04

6. Emergency Water Supply

- When structural fire-defense water is required, it must be installed and serviceable before and during construction unless an approved alternative method of protection is provided.
- Water systems meeting or exceeding the California Fire Code are accepted. Where a municipal-type water supply is unavailable, the Fire Safe Regulations recognize NFPA 1142 as a basis for rural fire-fighting water supply.
- Emergency water can be provided by approved mobile water tenders or natural/man-made containment where the required quantity is immediately available.
- Hydrant and water-supply features are additionally regulated by the CFC and applicable local requirements.

Code reference: 14 CCR §§1275.00-1275.04

7. Building Siting and Setbacks

- The standard parcel setback is 30 feet for buildings from property lines and/or the center of a road.
- A reduced setback can be allowed for practical site constraints only when an alternative method is provided to reduce structure-to-structure ignition risk.
- Examples identified in the regulation include noncombustible walls/fences, noncombustible material extending from the building, hardscape, or reduced exposed glazing on the affected side.
- Fuel modification and wildfire vegetation requirements may also apply and should be coordinated with current state and local wildfire requirements.

Code reference: 14 CCR §1276.01 and related Article 5 provisions

8. Coordination With the California Fire Code

Title 14 Fire Safe requirements and the California Fire Code address overlapping but not identical subjects. A project can be required to meet both. For example, Title 14 establishes a 10-foot driveway traffic lane, while a driveway that is also a required CFC fire apparatus access road can be subject to the CFC 20-foot access-road standard unless an approved alternative or other applicable provision applies.

Primary References

- California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2 - State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations
- 14 CCR Article 2 - Ingress and Egress; Article 3 - Signing and Building Numbering; Article 4 - Emergency Water Standards; Article 5 - Building Siting, Setbacks and Fuel Modification
- 2025 California Fire Code, Chapter 5 - Fire Service Features
- NFPA 1142 - Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting, where incorporated/applicable

This handout is an informational summary. It does not replace the adopted code, approved plans, permit conditions, State licensing requirements, or determinations of the fire code official. Project-specific requirements may vary.