

ADDRESSING OF BUILDINGS

2025 California Fire Code — Section 505.1, Address Identification

Code requirement: “New and existing buildings shall be provided with approved address identification.” The requirements below summarize the remainder of CFC §505.1 in a public-friendly format.

Minimum Address Identification Requirements

Requirement	What the Code Requires
Where required	New and existing buildings must have approved address identification.
Visibility	The address must be legible and positioned so it can be seen from the street or road fronting the property.
Contrast	Address characters must contrast with the background on which they are mounted.
Character type	Use Arabic numerals or alphabetical letters. Address numbers may not be spelled out.
Minimum height	Each character must be at least 4 inches (102 mm) high.
Minimum stroke width	Each character must have a stroke width of at least 1/2 inch (12.7 mm).
Additional locations	The fire code official may require address identification in additional approved locations when needed to facilitate emergency response.
Private roads / not visible	If access is by a private road and the building cannot be seen from the public way, the structure must be identified by a monument, pole, sign, or other approved means.
Maintenance	Required address identification must be maintained so it remains visible and legible.

Important for emergency response

An address that meets the minimum character size can still fail the code requirement if it is not visible or legible from the street or road serving the property. Visibility, contrast, location, and maintenance are all part of compliance.

Official References

Primary: 2025 California Fire Code, Title 24, Part 9, §505.1 — Address Identification

[ICC Digital Codes — 2025 California Fire Code, Chapter 5](#)

Cross-reference: 2024 International Building Code, §502.1 — Address Identification

[ICC Digital Codes — 2024 International Building Code, Chapter 5](#)

Code note: This handout summarizes the cited code requirements for public use. It does not replace the adopted California Fire Code, approved plans, permits, or determinations required by the applicable code.