

Chapter 15.60

STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA FIRE SAFE REGULATIONS OF THE COUNTY

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I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

15.60.010 Short Title and Purpose.

This Chapter shall be known as and may be cited as the State Responsibility Area Fire Safe Regulations of the County, and is necessary in order to provide minimum uniform standards for basic emergency access, perimeter wildfire protection measures, signing and building numbering, private water supply reserves for emergency fire use and vegetation modification. The purpose of these regulations is to: create a safer environment for citizens within the wildlands of Fresno County; reduce the destruction and damage to structures and resources; and provide defensible space protecting citizens and firefighters.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.020 Regulating Authority.

Pursuant to the authority conferred by Sections 4290 and 4291 of the Public Resources Code of the State of California, the currently adopted edition of the California Fire Code, and in addition to any other regulations provided by law, the regulations in this Chapter contained are established herewith and shall apply to all future design and construction of both residential and commercial structures, subdivisions, parcel maps, and developments wholly or partly within state responsibility areas in the unincorporated area of the County.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.030 Applicability.

Application of fire regulations shall be required for the following applications for which approval has not been granted as of the effective date of this Chapter.

- A. Applications for Building Permits for new construction not relating to an existing structure;
- B. Applications for tentative subdivisions;
- C. Applications for divisions of land regulated by Fresno County Ordinance Code Title 17, Division of Land, Section 17.72, Parcel Maps;
- D. Applications for Use Permits and Site Plan Reviews for construction or development;
- E. Construction of new roads, or extension of an existing road.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 07-049 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.040 Required Improvements.

- A. As a condition precedent to acceptance and approval of a Subdivision Map or document, the divider shall make, or agree to make, the improvements required by this Chapter.
- B. As a condition precedent to issuing occupancy for improvements on a parcel of land, the owner/permittee or Developer shall make the improvements required by this Chapter. The Director at his discretion may allow the deferment of the required improvements through the execution of an agreement and the posting of adequate securities.

(Ord. 07-049 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

II. DEFINITIONS

15.60.100 Word Interpretation.

"May" indicates an action which is permissive. "Shall" indicates an action which is mandatory. All words in the singular shall include the plural, and plural, the singular. Each gender shall include the other. Each tense shall include the other tense.

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.110 Definitions.

- A. "Accessory structure" means any structure used as an accessory to residential, commercial, recreational, industrial or educational purposes for which a Building Permit is required.
- B. "Board" means Board of Supervisors of the County.
- C. "Building" means any structure used for residential, commercial, recreational, industrial or educational purposes including mobile and manufactured homes.
- D. "Building Official" means the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning or his/her designee.
- E. "Cal Fire" means California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.
- F. "Cul-de-sac" means a road which terminates in a permanent turnaround and which by design is not intended to continue beyond its terminal point.
- G. "Dead-end road" (stub road) means a road which is terminated at the boundary line of a parcel or lot but which will be extended at a later date to provide access to abutting land.
- H. "Defensible space" means the area within the perimeter of a parcel development, neighborhood or community where basic wildland fire protection measures are implemented, providing the key point of defense from an approaching wildfire or defense against encroaching wildfires or escaping structure fires. The perimeter as used in this regulation is the area encompassing the parcel or parcels proposed for construction and/or development, excluding the physical structure itself. The area is characterized by the establishment and maintenance of emergency vehicle access, emergency water reserves, road names and building identification, and fuel modification measures.
- I. "Department" means the Department of Public Works and Planning of the County.
- J. "Director" means the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning of the County.
- K. "Driveway" means vehicular access that serves no more than three (3) dwelling units within no more than two (2) buildings constructed after January 1, 1991.
- L. "Dwelling unit" means two (2) or more rooms in a building designed for or occupied by one (1) family for living or sleeping purposes and having only one (1) kitchen and separate toilet facilities.
- M. "Fuel modification area" An area where the volume of flammable vegetation has been reduced, providing reduced fire intensity and duration.
- N. "Greenbelts" A facility or land-use, designed for a use other than fire protection, which will slow or resist the spread of a wildfire. Includes parking lots, irrigated or landscaped areas, golf courses, parks, playgrounds, maintained vineyards, orchards or annual crops that do not cure in the field.
- O. "Hammerhead/T" means a "T" shaped, three-point (3-point) turnaround space for emergency equipment, being no narrower than the road it serves.
- P. "Roads" means new roads or extensions of existing roads, whether public or private, providing vehicular access to more than one (1) parcel, constructed after January 1, 1991; access to any industrial or commercial occupancy; or vehicular access to a single parcel with more than two (2) buildings or four (4) or more dwelling units.
- Q. "Roadway" means any surface designed, improved, or ordinarily used for vehicle travel.
- R. "Roadway structures" means bridges and other appurtenant structures which supplement the roadway.

- S. "State Responsibility Area (SRA)" as defined in Public Resources Code Sections 4126 - 4127; and the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Article I, Sections 1220 - 1220.5.
- T. "Subdivision" means the division, by any subdivider, of any unit or units of improved or unimproved land, or any portion thereof, shown on the latest equalized County assessment roll as a unit or as contiguous units, for the purpose of sale, lease or financing, whether immediate or future. Property shall be considered as contiguous units, even if it is separated by roads, streets, utility easement or railroad rights-of-way. "Subdivision" includes a condominium project, as defined in Subdivision (d) of Section 1351 of the Civil Code, or the conversion of five (5) or more existing dwelling units to a stock cooperative, as defined in Subdivision (m) of Section 1351 of the Civil Code. For the purposes of this Ordinance, the definition of a "subdivision" includes the subdivision of four (4) or more parcels.
- U. "Turnaround" means a roadway, unobstructed by parking, which allows for a safe opposite change of direction for emergency equipment.
- V. "Turnout" means a widening in a roadway to allow vehicles to pass.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.120 Distance Measurements.

All specified or referenced distances are measured in the true horizontal distance, unless otherwise stated.
(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

III. PROCEDURES

15.60.200 Exceptions.

- A. The applicant may request an exception to the development requirements of this Chapter.
 - B. The Director may authorize modifications of development requirements as set forth in this Chapter, whenever the following finding is made:
 - 1. The modification provides the same overall practical effect as the development requirements towards providing defensible space.
- (Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.210 Exception — Application for Approval.

Application for the approval of an exception shall be made by filing the following items with the Department:

- A. A description of the request, including specific Sections of this Chapter for which the exception is requested;
 - B. Material facts supporting the request;
 - C. Details of alternative measures proposed;
 - D. A map showing the subject defensible space, improvements and alternative measures.
- (Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.220 Appeal Procedure.

The applicant or any person or agency adversely affected may, within ten (10) days of the decision of the Director, appeal that decision to the Appeals Board. Such appeal shall be made in writing and shall state the reasons for the appeal. The Board shall render its decision on the appeal after the close of its hearing. If the appeal is granted, the Board shall provide a copy of its Findings to the Cal Fire unit headquarters that administers SRA fire protection in the County.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.230 Filing Fee.

The Board of Supervisors shall establish by resolution the fees for filing an exception, which shall be paid at the time of filing thereof.
(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

IV. DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

15.60.300 Setbacks for Structures.

- A. All lawfully permitted buildings and accessory structures shall have a minimum setback of thirty feet (30') from all property lines. Planned unit developments and condominium projects shall have a minimum separation of sixty feet (60') between buildings.
- B. The above setbacks and separations may be reduced to the minimum setback required by the zone district property development standards for the project if any of the following conditions exist:
 - 1. The building is served by a community water supply system; or
 - 2. A one-hour (1-hour) fire wall is provided for all walls adjacent to the reduced setback area; or
 - 3. The reduced setback area is adjacent to an outlet for open space or similar area where construction of buildings is prohibited and the fuel is modified and maintained for at least one hundred feet (100'), or to the greatest extent feasible as determined by the authority having jurisdiction, from the building so as to prevent or retard the spread of fire.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.305 Improvements – Roads - Surfaces.

All new roads or extensions of existing roads shall provide for safe access for emergency wildfire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently, and shall provide unobstructed traffic circulation during a wildfire emergency.

- (a) Roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed load of fire apparatus weighing at least 75,000 pounds and provide an aggregate base.
- (b) Driveways and road and driveway structures shall be designed and maintained to support at least 40,000 pounds.
- (c) Project proponent shall provide engineering specifications to support design, if requested by the local authority having jurisdiction

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.310 Road Width.

All new roads or extensions of existing roads shall:

- A. One lane roads shall be constructed to provide a minimum twelve-foot (12') travel lane;
- B. Two lane roads shall be constructed to provide the equivalent of two (2) ten-foot (10') travel lanes.
- C. Provide, for horizontal curves, an additional width of:
 - 1. Four feet (4') for curves having a centerline radius of fifty to one hundred feet (50' – 100');
 - 2. Two feet (2') for curves having a centerline radius of one hundred to two hundred feet (100' – 200').

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.315 Roads - Cul-de-sacs; Dead-end Roads.

- A. The maximum length of new cul-de-sac roads, dead-end roads or extensions thereof, including all roads accessed from that road shall not exceed the following cumulative lengths:

1. Eight hundred feet (800') for parcels zoned for less than one (1) acre;
 2. One thousand three hundred-twenty feet (1,320') for parcels zoned for one (1) to 4.99 acres;
 3. Two thousand six hundred-forty feet (2,640') for parcels zoned for five (5) to 19.99 acres;
 4. Five thousand two hundred-eighty feet (5,280') for parcels zoned for twenty (20) acres or larger.
- B. Extensions of lengths may be approved providing that an emergency access easement, improved to a standard adequate for fire protection equipment, connects the end of the cul-de-sac to a public road.
- C. Where cul-de-sac roads cross areas of differing zone districts, requiring different length limits, the shortest allowable length shall apply.
- D. A turnaround shall be provided at the end of all cul-de-sac roads and at one thousand three hundred-twenty foot (1,320') maximum intervals for Subdivisions A.3 and A.4 of this Section.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.320 Roads - One-way.

One-way roads may be approved by the Director in accordance with the following:

- A. Roads shall connect to a two-lane road at both ends;
- B. Roads shall provide access to a maximum of ten (10) dwelling units;
- C. Roads shall have a maximum length of two thousand six hundred-forty feet (2,640');
- D. A turnout shall be provided at approximately the midpoint of the length of the road exceeding one hundred-fifty feet (150') in length or every four hundred feet (400') for roads exceeding eight hundred feet (800') in length;
- E. A forty-foot (40') turning radius shall be provided at all gates.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.325 Driveways.

All driveways to buildings for which permits are issued on or after September 1, 1991, shall:

- A. Be improved in accordance with the requirements of this Chapter;
- B. Have turnouts near the midpoint of the length of driveways exceeding one hundred-fifty feet (150') in length or every four hundred feet (400') for driveways exceeding eight hundred feet (800') in length;
- C. Provide a turn-around within fifty feet (50') of buildings served by driveways in excess of three hundred feet (300') in length;
- D. Driveways shall be constructed to provide a minimum ten-foot (10') travel lane. All driveways required by this Chapter shall be constructed to provide unobstructed vertical and horizontal clearance of fifteen feet (15') along its entire length.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.330 Gates.

All gates installed after September 1, 1991, on roads and driveways shall:

- A. Be inset a minimum of thirty feet (30') from the intersection of a road and provide for opening of the gate without obstructing traffic on the intersecting road;
- B. Have entrances a minimum of two feet (2') wider than the traveled way serving the gate.
- C. Security Gates if installed will have a Knox box type lock, which can be obtained from the local fire agency with jurisdiction.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.335 Signs - Road.

Signs shall be placed prior to occupancy of a building, for which a permit is issued on or after September 1, 1991, recordation of a map or document for the division of property or prior to acceptance of road improvements in accordance with the following:

- A. At the intersections of all roads identifying the names of the roads;
 - B. At the intersection preceding a traffic limitation and no more than one hundred feet (100') before such limitation identifying the following limitations:
 - 1. Weight,
 - 2. Vertical clearance,
 - 3. One-way or single-lane conditions,
 - 4. Cul-de-sac roads, dead-end road,
 - 5. Other limitations identified by the Director;
 - C. Shall be visible and legible from both directions for a distance of at least one hundred feet (100');
 - D. Shall be placed at a height of seven feet (7') to the bottom of the sign.
- (Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.340 Address Standards.

All buildings, for which a permit is issued on or after January 1, 1991, shall have a permanently posted address installed at the beginning of construction in accordance with the following:

- A. Shall be physically installed on the building;
 - B. At the intersection of the road and driveway entrance serving the building or be visible from the road;
 - C. Shall be visible and legible for a minimum of one hundred feet (100') from both directions of travel along the road;
 - D. Shall be on a single post where multiple addresses are for a single driveway;
 - E. Shall be posted at intersections of roads and/or driveways to clearly indicate the direction to the structure served.
 - F. All signs required by this Chapter shall:
 - 1. Have a minimum four-inch (4") letter/number height, one-half inch (1/2") stroke;
 - 2. Be reflectorized;
 - 3. Have letter/number color contrasting with the background color;
 - 4. Be of a fire-retardant material mounted on a fire-retardant post;
 - 5. Signs shall comply with the current adopted edition of the California Fire Code.
- (Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.345 Flammable Vegetation and Fuels.

All flammable vegetation and fuels caused by site development including road and driveway construction and fuel modification shall be properly disposed of prior to occupancy of a building or acceptance of road construction, whichever is appropriate.

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.350 Water Supply.

Emergency water for wildfire protection shall be provided for all subdivisions, divisions of parcels, Use Permits, Site Plan Reviews and existing lots used for single-family dwelling units which have an agreement and/or condition to provide water in accordance with the following:

- A. Where community water systems are required, hydrants shall be installed consistent with the currently adopted fire code and as deemed necessary by the fire agency having jurisdiction prior to completion of road construction;
 - B. Where individual water systems are allowed, individual water supply facilities shall be provided prior to completion of building construction.
- (Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.355 Hydrant – Location (Individual Residential Systems).

- A. Hydrants are required to be located along an all-weather surface road and shall be no closer than four feet (4') nor farther than twelve feet (12') from the roadway and in a location where fire equipment using it will not block traffic.
- B. Hydrants shall not be less than fifty feet (50') nor more than five hundred feet (500') by road from the building it is to serve.
- C. A turn-out or turn-around shall be provided at hydrants located on driveways or roads.
(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

V. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

15.60.400 Improvement Plans.

Where improvements are required by the provisions of this Chapter, Improvement Plans shall be submitted to the appropriate Department for review and approval. The Director may require the plans to be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer.

(Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.410 Hydrant/Fire Valve – Signing (Individual Residential Systems).

A sign shall be provided within three feet (3') of the hydrant/fire valve or access to water required by this Chapter in accordance with the following:

- A. The sign shall be identified with a three-inch (3") reflectorized blue marker mounted on a fire-retardant post three to five feet (3' – 5') above the ground and visible from the driveway; or
- B. The sign shall be identified as specified in the State Fire Marshal's Guidelines for fire hydrant markings along state highways and freeways.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.415 Maintenance.

Provisions shall be made for maintenance of all improvements required by this Chapter through a County Service Area or a Benefit Assessment District as authorized by Government Code Section 50078, or other method approved by the Director.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.505 Grades.

The grade for roads and new driveways shall not exceed twelve percent (12%) except that the Director may approve grades not exceeding twenty percent (20%) upon request where unusual physical features of the terrain exist. Approval may be granted upon submission of sufficient adequate information to evaluate the need to exceed the twelve percent (12%) maximum grade.

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.510 Roadway Radius.

All roadways required by this Chapter shall have a minimum centerline radius of fifty-nine feet (59') for horizontal curves and a minimum length of one hundred feet (100') for vertical curves.

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

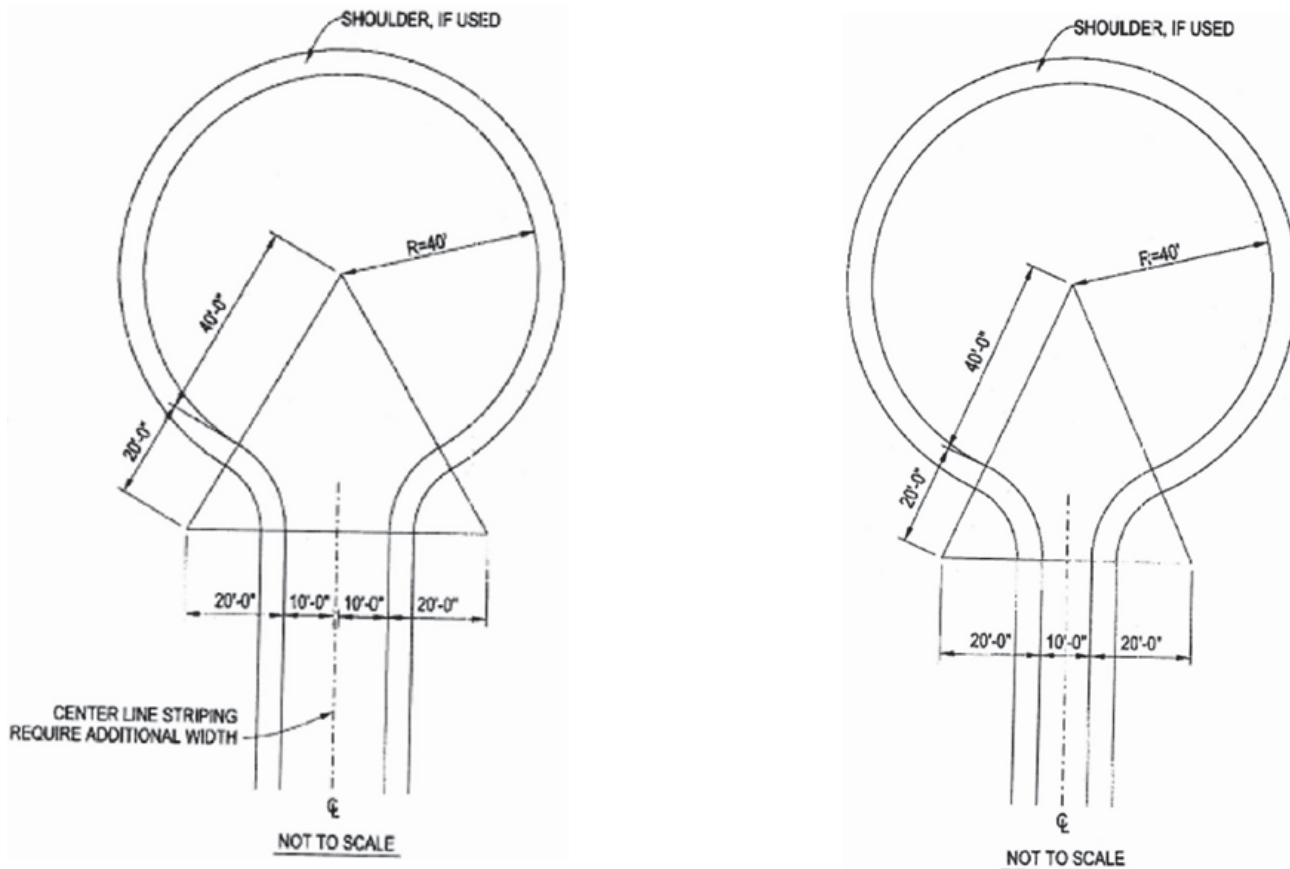
15.60.515 Turnouts.

Turnouts shall be a minimum of twelve feet (12') wide and thirty feet (30') long with a minimum twenty-five-foot (25') taper at each end.

(Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.520 Turnarounds.

Turnarounds shall provide a minimum unobstructed turning radius of forty feet (40') from the centerline of the road, or if a hammerhead/T is used, the top of the "T" shall be a minimum of sixty feet (60') in length.



(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.525 Roadway Structures.

All roadway structures for roads and driveways shall:

- A. Be designed by a Registered Civil Engineer to provide structural adequacy for fire protection vehicles and constructed in accordance with plans approved by the Director;
- B. Be signed to reflect limitations and capacities;
- C. Shall provide for unobstructed visibility from one (1) end to the other and provide turnouts at both ends for one (1) lane structures.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.535 Water Systems.

Water systems for wildfire protection required by this Chapter shall meet or exceed the following standards:

- A. Water systems for subdivisions and commercial structures shall comply with the current adopted edition of the California Fire Code and the most current edition of the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1142, "Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Firefighting".

- B. Individual residential systems shall comply with the most current edition of the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1142 "Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Firefighting", which includes provisions for the use of ponds, streams, cisterns, two thousand five hundred (2,500) gallon above-ground storage tanks and swimming pools.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part), Ord. 91-025 §1 (part).)

15.60.540 Hydrants/Fire Valves (Residential).

Fire hydrants or valves shall be eighteen inches (18") above grade and eight feet (8') from flammable vegetation. Heads shall be brass with two and one-half inch (2-1/2") National Hose male thread with cap for pressure and gravity flow systems and four and one-half inch (4-1/2") for draft systems.

(Amended by Ord. 10-008, Ord. 03-0001 (part).)