

U.S. Fire Administration / National Fire Academy

Coffee Break Training

Topic: Fire Access During Construction

Learning objective: The student will be able to explain the requirements for fire department apparatus access during construction.

Many fires occur while buildings are under construction, which may be the time structures are the most vulnerable.

In order to provide fire suppression forces prompt and efficient access to a job site, the fire codes require fire apparatus access roads that are capable of supporting heavy fire equipment.

Construction site access road specifications differ in the two major model codes. The International Fire Code[®] requires “approved”

vehicle access and specifies that the road must extend to within 100 feet of temporary or permanent fire department connections. Permanent access roads must reach within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior wall of a building’s first floor.

NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code[™], requires that access roads be provided and maintained during construction. It does not differentiate between construction and permanent access roads. Roads must reach

within 50 feet of a single exterior door that provides access to the building’s interior.

For additional information, refer to International Fire Code[®], Chapter 14; and NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code[™], Chapters 16 and 18; and NFPA 241, Standard for the Safeguarding Construction, Alteration and Demolition Operations.

