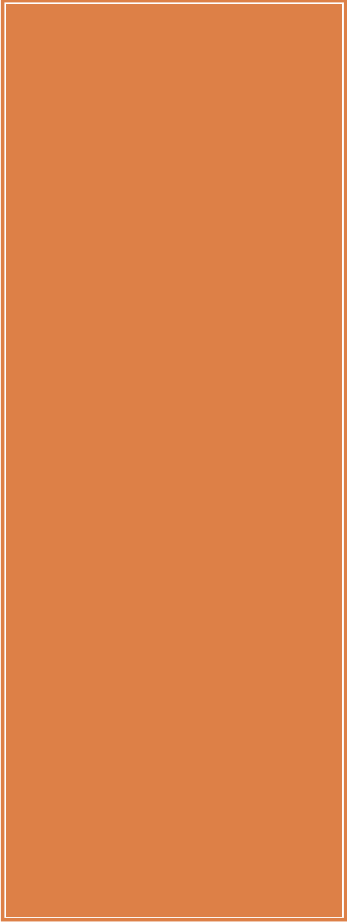


Proposed Ordinance Amending Sonoma County Code Chapter 13, Article V, Fire Safe Standards

Board of Supervisors, County of Sonoma
August 4, 2020



Sonoma County Code Chapter 13, Fire Safe Standards

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- Chapter 13 Article V applies to State Responsibility areas (SRA)
 - Board of Forestry regulations set forth standards to ensure fire equipment access and civilian evacuation.
 - Board of Forestry allows local jurisdictions to adopt their own ordinances. After adoption, the Board of Forestry reviews it for certification.

Background

- Sonoma County's Fire Safe Standards were certified by the Board of Forestry (BOF) in 2017.
- The BOF updated its regulations on January, 1, 2020, and again on July 27, 2020.
- When the BOF updates its regulations, counties that have local ordinances must submit those ordinances for re-certification.

Background

- Many counties are waiting for certification. No other county has received certification since January 2020.
- Sonoma County staff have been working with BOF staff to update Sonoma County's proposed ordinance to align with State standards.
- The proposed ordinance includes all of the changes suggested by the BOF staff and Cal Fire staff.

Proposed Amendment Summary

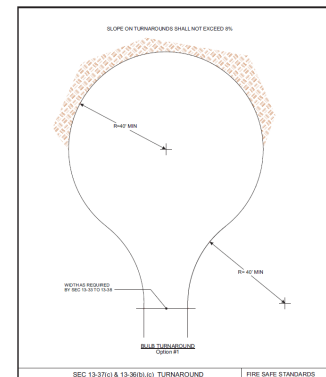
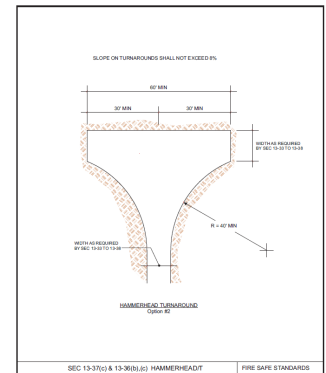
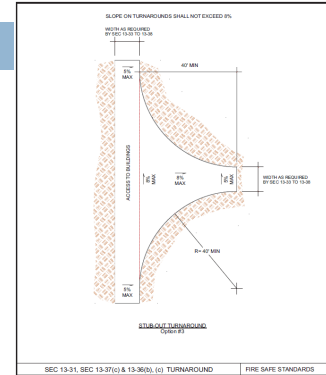
- The ordinance would clarify requirements for road widths for minor subdivisions (4 parcels or less).
- It would clarify Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are exempt from some requirements of the Fire Safe Standards.
- Clarify requirements for authorizing alternatives that would have the same practical effect to provide fire safety.

Proposed Amendment Summary

- The most significant change is the clarification about existing road access.
- For many years, Sonoma County has required that existing roads have year round fire engine access.
- The updated ordinance provides a checklist that Fire Prevention Staff can use to verify that there is year round fire engine access.

Requirements for year-round fire apparatus access

- A. Any existing private road can satisfy Fire Safe Standards if it provides:
- At least a twelve foot path of travel and at least one foot of vegetation clearance on each side of the road.
 - Additional turnouts and turnarounds or other mitigation measures may be required to allow for concurrent fire engine access and civilian evacuation.
 - Requirements for existing public roads are in the Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works and Permit Sonoma *Guidelines for Traffic Impact Studies*.



Requirements for year-round fire apparatus access

- B. All of the other provisions of Chapter 13 Article V apply to any road if it is extended, reconstructed or improved pursuant to a development approval.
- C. All existing roads shall comply with signage and building numbering requirements.

Requirements for year-round fire apparatus access

- D. All roads shall have vertical clearances that conform to the requirements in the California Vehicle Code.
- E. Plans, engineering calculations and other data necessary to determine compliance with Fire Safe Standards will be required at the time of project application.

Next Steps

- If the Board of Supervisors approves the proposed ordinance, we will submit the ordinance to BOF.
- BOF staff have reviewed the ordinance and stated the proposed ordinance addresses all of the requests made by the BOF.
- BOF will consider recertification in September, 2020.

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Questions

