

Section 426 - Fire Safety Standards

426.1 Purpose

The requirements of this Section are established to provide minimal standards for the protection of buildings from fire hazard. Compliance with these standards will assist designated rural fire protection personnel or a property owner in reducing fire suppression activities that may be required to protect dwellings and structures, and help prevent the spread of fire to surrounding lands.

426.2 Mandatory Standards

The following fire safety standards are mandatory for all new construction in the unincorporated areas of Jefferson County, unless a variance has been granted in accordance with Section 426.5. New construction includes additions to existing buildings and replacement buildings.

A. Roof Coverings

New buildings, reroofing of existing buildings, and additions to buildings that will have a roof area more than 50 percent of the existing roof area, shall have Underwriter's Laboratory rated Class A or B roofing or equivalent, or tile or metal roofing. Wood roofing of any type, including pressure treated wood shingles or shakes, is prohibited.

B. Chimneys and Stovepipes

The openings of all chimneys and stovepipes shall be completely covered with a spark arrester which is constructed of 12 USA standard gauge wire which has openings no larger than ½ inch in size.

C. Slope

New dwellings shall be located on a slope of less than 40 percent, based on the natural grade.

D. Fire Fighting Protection

Where possible, dwellings shall be located within a fire district that provides structural fire protection. If the property is not in a fire district, the following standards shall be met:

1. The property owner shall provide evidence that they have requested that the nearest fire district either annex the property, or provide fire protection by contract if annexation is not possible. If the fire district will not provide protection, the County may require alternative fire protection measures, including one or more of the recommended standards in Section 426.3.
2. The property owner shall sign and record in the deed records for the County a Waiver of Remonstrance and Agreement binding the landowner, and the landowner's successors in interest, acknowledging that the property is in an area where no fire protection will be provided and

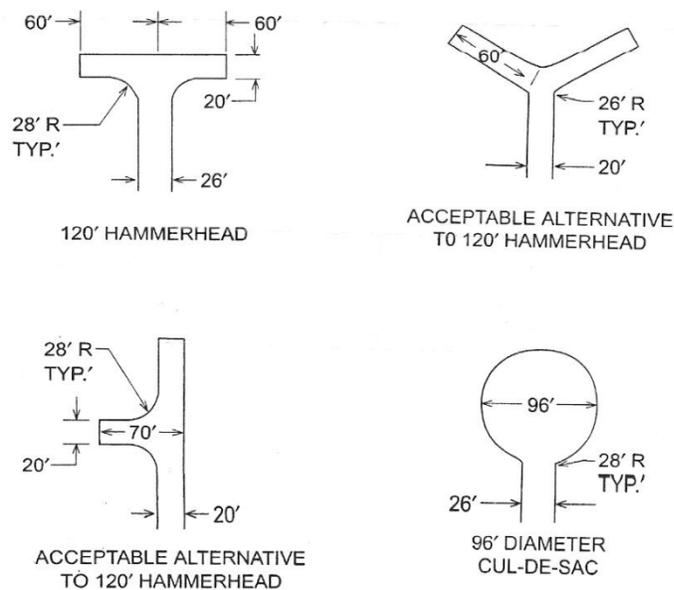
agreeing to hold Jefferson County harmless for any damage to life or property caused by fire.

E. Emergency Vehicle Access

Access to within 50 feet of all buildings shall be constructed to the following standards unless a variance has been granted in accordance with Section 426.5. However, existing access to a lawfully established building that does not meet these standards need not be upgraded to comply with the standards when an improvement to the building or a proposed accessory building is valued at less than \$10,000, provided that the existing access is adequate to provide ingress and egress by fire protection vehicles.

1. Access roads and driveways serving a single residence shall have a surface width of at least 12 feet. The width shall be increased to a minimum of 14 feet in curves with a centerline radius of less than 150 feet to ensure emergency vehicles remain on an all weather surface. The area extending at least 10 feet from each side of the driveway's centerline shall be kept clear of obstructions and shall be maintained as a fuel break. Driveways more than 250 feet in length shall include turnouts at 150 foot intervals or lesser distance as needed to allow visibility. Turnouts shall be at least 10 feet in width and 50 feet in length, and shall meet the same load requirements as required by subsection (4).
2. Access roads and driveways serving more than one residence shall have a surface width of at least 20 feet.
3. Commercial or industrial buildings that will have any portion of an exterior wall more than 150 feet from an existing road shall have an emergency vehicle access drive with a surface width of at least 20 feet.
4. A minimum clear height of at least 14½ feet shall be maintained for the entire width of the driveway.
5. Access shall be designed and constructed to maintain a minimum 75,000 pound load carrying capacity. If not designed by an engineer, driveways shall be constructed of a minimum of 5 compacted inches of crushed rock meeting ODOT material standards. The road shall be compacted until a loaded 10 cubic yard dump truck ceases to deflect the road.
6. Maximum finished grade shall be no greater than 10 percent unless approved by the fire chief. Grade shall not exceed 4 percent in turnarounds. Any portion of the access with a grade greater than 8 percent shall be surfaced with 1.5 inch class C asphalt mix, 0-11 oil mat, or four inch fiber mesh reinforced Portland cement concrete.
7. Curves shall have a minimum centerline radius of 55 feet, including the intersection of a driveway with a public road.

8. Gates shall be a minimum of 20 feet wide, and shall be of a swinging or sliding type constructed of materials that allow manual operation by one person. Electric gates shall be equipped with a Knox box purchased from the fire district.
9. Dead-end access roads and driveways more than 150 feet in length shall terminate in a 120-foot hammerhead, 60-foot “Y” or 96-foot diameter cul-de-sac or alternative turnaround arrangement as shown in the following diagrams. Turnarounds shall also be provided every ½ mile on dead-end access roads and driveways exceeding one mile in length. The turnaround area shall meet the same load requirements as required by subsection (4).



F. Address Signs

An address sign shall be posted at the point where a driveway leaves a road, in such a manner as to be visible to vehicles approaching from both directions. A directional address sign must also be posted at the junction where an individual driveway leaves a shared driveway. Address signs shall contain white, reflective numbers at least 3 inches in height on a green background.

G. Fuel Breaks

Irrigated agricultural land and properties that are inside an Urban Growth Boundary are exempt from the fuel break requirements, but must comply with all other fire safety standards. Fuel breaks shall not be developed within riparian protection areas required by Section 419.1. In all other areas, fuel breaks are required that meet the following standards, unless a variance has been granted in accordance with Section 426.5:

1. A primary fuel break shall be developed and maintained around all buildings. The fuel break shall be at least 30 feet wide, or to the property

line, whichever is the shortest distance. The fuel break shall be measured from the furthest extension of the structure, including attached carports, the outside edge of a deck, and the edge of roof eaves. The goal within the primary fuel break is to remove fuels that will produce flame lengths in excess of one foot. Brush, downed limbs and other dead plant material must be removed. The primary fuel break should contain primarily non-flammable ground cover such as asphalt, concrete, rock, brick, bare soil, green grass, or succulent ground cover. Combustible ground cover or plant materials, such as bark mulch or accumulated leaves and needles, are prohibited within twelve inches of buildings. Herbaceous plants such as groundcovers, bedding plants, bulbs and perennial flowers are permitted provided they are kept green during the fire season. Dry grass is allowed if kept less than four inches in height. Isolated groupings of deciduous ornamental shrubbery and trees, native trees or other low plants (less than 24 inches) are allowed when maintained in a green condition free of dead plant material and ladder fuels, and provided they are arranged and maintained in such a way that minimizes the possibility a fire can spread to adjacent vegetation. Healthy trees are permitted, provided they are pruned to remove branches that are dead or that are less than 10 vertical feet above the ground. A 15-foot clearance between tree limbs and stovepipes or chimney outlets must be maintained. No branches may overhang within 25 vertical feet of a roof. Areas under decks shall be kept free of firewood, stored flammable materials, leaves and needles.

2. A fuel break shall be developed and maintained immediately adjacent to any driveway that is more than 150 feet in length. The fuel break shall extend at least ten feet from each side of the centerline of the driveway, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. A minimum clear height of at least 14½ feet shall be maintained for the entire width of the driveway and fuel break. The driveway fuel break shall meet the same requirements as outlined in subsection (1) for ground cover and limbing of trees.

H. Storage of Flammable Materials

The area under decks and stairways shall be kept free of flammable material, including leaves and needles. Firewood and lumber piles shall be kept at least 20 feet away from buildings from April 1 through November 1, unless kept within a fully enclosed building.

426.3 Recommended Standards

The following fire safety standards are recommended in all areas that are susceptible to a wildfire, and one or more of the standards may be required in areas with a high wildfire hazard when a fire district will not provide structural fire protection:

- A. All permanent openings into and under the structure, including the area under decks, shall be completely covered with noncombustible, corrosion-resistant, mesh screening material which has openings no greater than ¼ inch in size.

- B. Eaves shall be boxed in.
- C. Fire resistant building materials such as stucco or fiber-cement siding shall be used.
- D. An automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed.
- E. Onsite fire fighting equipment and water storage shall be provided. The water supply shall contain at least 4,000 gallons at all times. Road access to within 15 feet of the water source shall be provided for fire apparatus, with a turnaround adequate to accommodate the firefighting equipment. Permanent signs shall be posted along the access route to show the location of the emergency water source. If providing road access to the water source is not feasible, the water source shall be equipped with a minimum 2 ½ inch dry standpipe assembly equipped with NST (National Standard Thread) fittings to enable fire equipment to draught water.
- F. A minimum 20 foot secondary fuel break shall be created around buildings. The secondary fuel break shall extend in all directions around the primary fuel break required by Section 426.2(G). An additional 50 feet, for a total of 100 feet of fuel break, shall be created when the slope around a dwelling exceeds 20 percent. This additional 50 feet is required downhill and to each side of the dwelling, but is not required uphill of the dwelling. The goal of the secondary fuel break is to reduce fuels so that the overall intensity of a wildfire will be lessened and the likelihood of crown fires and crowning is reduced. Healthy trees are permitted, provided they are pruned to remove branches that are dead or that are less than 10 vertical feet above the ground. Small trees and shrubs growing underneath larger trees must be removed or pruned to less than 1/3 the height of the lowest branch of the larger trees. Understory vegetation may include lawns or groundcover maintained at less than 12 inches in height, and low shrubs arranged in a manner so that fire cannot spread between plantings or into trees. Brush and dead plant material must be removed.
- G. Open fires and use of burn barrels shall not occur unless in compliance with Jefferson County fire District standards.
- H. LPG tanks shall be placed according to state Fire Marshall standards.

426.4 Timing of Compliance with Standards

- A. Compliance with the standards in subsections 426.2 (A) through (D) will be verified at the time of application for a building permit. Building permits will not be issued unless the building plans clearly show that the standards will be met.
- B. The standards in subsections 426.2 (E) through (G) must be met at or prior to beginning framing of the building, or prior to placement of a manufactured home.

No building inspections other than for the forms and foundation will be approved until the standards are met.

- C. If the proposal is for an agricultural building or equine facility that is exempt from obtaining building permits, the applicant shall provide evidence that all standards are met at the time of application for the exemption. The exemption will not be approved until the standards are met.

426.5 Variances to Fire Safety Standards

An application for a variance to any of the fire safety standards in this Section shall be processed under the variance procedures in Section 508. The County will notify fire agencies of the proposed variance and will consider their comments and recommendations when deciding whether the variance should be approved. Conditions may be placed on any approval of a variance to fire safety standards when deemed necessary to reduce fire hazards.