



BULLETIN RB06-063

(Updated 2015 Dec 18)

FIREFIGHTING ACCESS FOR PART 9 BUILDINGS

Reference: Sentence 9.10.20.3.(1), Sentence 9.10.20.3.(2), A-3.2.5.6.(1), and A-9.10.20.3.(1)

Sentence 9.10.20.3.(1) “Access for fire department equipment shall be provided to each *building* by means of a *street*, private roadway or yard (see A-3.2.5.6.(1). and A-9.10.20.3.(1) in Appendix A.)”

Sentence 9.10.20.3.(2) “Where access to a *building* as required in **Sentence (1)** is provided by means of a roadway or yard, the design and location of such roadways or yard shall take into account connection with public thoroughfares, weight of firefighting equipment, width of roadway, radius of curves, overhead clearance, location of fire hydrants, location of fire department connections and vehicular parking.”

A-3.2.5.6.(1) Fire Department Access Route “The design and construction of fire department access routes involves the consideration of many variables, some of which are specified in the requirements in the Code. All these variables should be considered in relation to the type and size of fire department vehicles available in the municipality or area where the building will be constructed. It is appropriate, therefore, that the local fire department be consulted prior to the design and construction of access routes.”

A-9.10.20.3.(1) Fire Department Access Route Modification “in addition to other considerations taken into account in the planning of fire department access routes, special variations could be permitted for a house or residential building that is protected with an automatic sprinkler system. The sprinkler system must be designed in accordance with the appropriate **NFPA** standard and there must be assurance that water supply pressure and quantity are unlikely to fail. These considerations could apply to buildings that are located on the sides of hills and are not conveniently accessible by roads designed for firefighting equipment and also to infill housing units that are located behind other buildings on a given property.

Question:

How close does a street have to be from a building before it can be considered as being acceptable for fire fighters' use in a **Part 9** building?

Commentary / Relevant Facts:

For buildings under Part 3 of the Code, the maximum distance from a street to the principal entrance and every access opening of a building is limited to 15 m (**3.2.5.5.(1)**). As this distance depends solely on the limitation of the firefighting equipment, it should not vary with the size of the building, although the above Articles do not stipulate such a maximum.

However, in practice, due consideration must be given to groups of Part 9 buildings (e.g., in a townhouse complex) where it may not be practicable for all individual buildings to comply with this requirement.

Conclusion:

For non-residential buildings under **Part 9** of the **Code**, the distance of the principal entrance from a street shall be not less than 3 m and not more than 15 m. Where the layout and site conditions make the maximum distance impractical, it may be increased to 20 m in consultation with the Fire Department on an individual basis.

For residential **Part 9** buildings, including townhouse complexes, the above distance should not exceed 45 m.

Chief Building Inspector

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Unless stated otherwise, the Code references in this bulletin are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2014 (ABC 2014). Bulletins do not overrule the ABC 2014 nor constitute a relaxation of the Code. They serve to clarify the Code in areas where the latter is ambiguous or does not cover a specific topic. Bulletins are City of Calgary clarifications for staff use to enable consistency in the application of the Code. These bulletins should always be read in the context of the appropriate requirements of the Code.