



Fire Access Driveway Standards

Essential Handout

22

Revised September 2026

SKAGITCOUNTYWA.GOV

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This information only applies to property within unincorporated Skagit County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

A driveway to serve residential or commercial uses must meet the following standards from the International Fire Code. These standards are the minimum and apply to all building permits. Roads within a new subdivision must comply with the [Skagit County Road Standards](#).

When is Fire Access required?

Fire apparatus access must be provided for every facility, building, or portion of a building constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction when the facility is over 150 feet from the access point. Exceptions may be made for minor additions or accessory buildings to existing dwellings when in the opinion of the Fire Marshal the addition or accessory building may not create significantly dangerous situations.

Can I install a security gate?

Yes, security gates are permitted across driveways and fire access roads. Gates require a permit and must be approved by the Skagit County Fire Marshal for fire personnel emergency operations.

What if my property is not located within a Fire District?

For lots not located within a fire district and accessible only by water, the road access requirement may be waived if the project meets all the other requirements of Skagit County Unified Development Code to qualify for a building permit.

Can the Fire Marshal modify the standards?

Yes, the Fire Marshal may make modifications to these standards if the road is not accessible because of topography, waterways, non-negotiable grades, or similar conditions. These modifications are based on residential buildings being protected by NFPA 13D automatic sprinkler systems, and additional fire protection as required by the Fire Marshal.

What are the design standards?

Use the tables below to determine which standards apply to your project. Private roads that serve more than 2 lots must comply with the [Skagit County Road Standards](#).

Standards Based on Use

Description	1-2 Residential Lots	3 or more Residential Lots or Commercial Use
Width	12'	20'
Vertical Clearance	13'6"	13'6"
Turning Radius- Inside	28'	28'
Turning Radius - Outside	50'	50'
Turnouts	20' wide by 30' long, every 300'	N/A
Road Terminus (for roadways exceeding 150 ft.)	Acceptable means of turning around fire apparatus approved by the Fire Marshal	96' cul-de-sac standards or as approved by the Fire Marshal
Bridges	Pursuant to Skagit County Road Standards HS-25	Pursuant to Skagit County Road Standards HS-25

Standards Based on Grade

The table below applies to all residential and commercial driveways.

Grade	Surface	Fire Suppression System	Water Storage
≤ 12%	Gravel, concrete, asphalt, or equivalent	Not required	Not required
> 12% and ≤ 14%	Concrete, asphalt, or equivalent	Not required	Not required
> 14% and ≤ 16%	Gravel, concrete, asphalt, or equivalent	NFPA 13D system required	Not required
> 16%	Gravel, concrete, asphalt, or equivalent	NFPA 13D system required	10,000-gallon water storage tank with dry hydrant required for each residence

Notes:

- For roads accepted or platted by Skagit County prior to June 11, 1990, the Fire Marshal may modify these standards if firefighting or rescue operations would not be possible.
- Emergency vehicle access roads or driveways may not be obstructed in any manner, including vehicle parking. Width and clearance requirements consistent with these standards must be maintained at all times.
- Developments or Land Divisions with 20 or more lots require secondary access.