

SECTION 4

FIRE SAFE STANDARDS

The complete Fire Safe Standards are incorporated into the Sonoma County Fire Code. The complete document is available at the front counter of the Sonoma County Permit and Resources Management Department or as a free download at;

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/eservice/FIRE.htm#GeneralNewConstruction>

Because of its unique combination of vegetation, topography and climate Sonoma County is subject to the threat of a major wildland fire. Fire Safe Standards were developed to help mitigate that threat. These standards are a combination of State regulations and local ordinance. The Fire Safe Standards text provides detailed information on the following requirements:

Plans
Timing of Installation
Emergency Access
Road and Driveway Surfaces
Road and Driveway Grades
Emergency Water Supply
Hydrants
Roadway and Driveway Structures
Turnaround & Turnouts
Gated Entrances
Premises Identification
Management of Flammable Vegetation

Due to the technical nature, it is highly recommended that a vegetation professional (architect, landscape architect, landscaper, etc.) assist you in preparing your vegetation management plan.

Setback for Building Defensible Space
Alternate Fire Protection Measures

Excerpt from Fire Safe Standards - Sec. 13-25 - Exceptions

The provisions of this article shall not apply to any of the following; except to the extent provided for herein:

- (a) Any building granted an agricultural exemption pursuant to Chapter 7 of this code, provided that the building does not exceed 8,000 square feet in size and is not located in a state responsibility area.
- (b) Any road or bridge used exclusively for access to an agricultural operation, or an agricultural exempt structure, or a Group U, Division 3 Occupancy, as defined in the county building code, that is under 1,000 square feet.
- (c) Any road or bridge used exclusively for the management and harvesting of wood products;
- (d) Any new building having a floor area of less than six hundred forty (640) square feet and containing an occupancy other than a detached Group U Occupancy as defined in the county

building code, except that the provisions of Divisions C and E of this article shall apply to all such buildings.

- (e) Any new building having a floor area of less than one thousand (1000) square feet and containing a detached Group U Occupancy as defined in the county building code, except that the provisions of Divisions C and E of this article shall apply to all such buildings.
- (f) Any existing road that provides year-round unobstructed access to conventional drive vehicles, including sedans and fire engines, which was constructed and serving a legal parcel prior to January 1, 1992, except that (1) the provisions of Division C of this article shall apply to all such roads, and (2) all of the other provisions of this article shall apply to any such road if it is extended, reconstructed or improved pursuant to a development approval, but only to the portion of the road that is extended, reconstructed or improved.
- (g) Any road required as a condition of any development approval granted prior to January 1, 1992, except that (1) the provisions of Division C of this article shall apply to all such roads, and (2) all of the other provisions of this article shall apply to any such road if it is extended, reconstructed or improved pursuant to a new development approval, but only to the portion of the road that is extended, reconstructed or improved.
- (h) Any driveway serving a legally constructed residential building prior to January 1, 1992, except that (1) the provisions of Division C of this article shall apply to all such roads, and (2) all of the other provisions of this article shall apply to any such driveway if it is extended, reconstructed or improved pursuant to a new development approval, but only to the portion of the driveway that is extended, reconstructed or improved.
- (i) Any legal or legal non-conforming building constructed prior to January 1, 1992, or any building for which a building permit was issued or an application for a building permit was accepted as complete for filing prior to January 1, 1992; except that the provisions of this article shall apply to any such building if the occupancy is changed, altered, or otherwise converted to any Group R, Division 3 occupancy as defined in the county building code.