



SCHOOLS FENCES AND GATES

The intent of this Salinas Fire Department (SFD) notice is to provide schools information on how maintain unimpeded emergency responder access at school properties, and to offer assistance to school staff in developing safe, and efficient fire evacuation plans. The SFD conducts regular site visits to all the schools in the City to review general fire safety, fire emergency evacuation plans, and emergency access.

Schools leaders need to ensure there is a safe and efficient fire evacuation plan, and that fire drills are conducted during the school year, and recorded. Also, evaluate perimeter security to ensure there is unobstructed, readily accessible pedestrian & vehicle gate access for emergency responders, while maintaining the appropriate level of security for the school sites. Lastly, SFD is available to assist school maintenance & safety departments, and other school staff with fire safety measures to take to decrease the chance of fire, and minimize the destructive nature of fire.

It is also the desire of SFD to provide options for compliance with applicable codes for vehicle and pedestrian gates used for emergency response vehicles, and access within our initial emergency response schools just outside the City limits: Boronda Meadows, Boronda Continuation School, Gavilan Middle School, Graves School, Lagunita School, La Joya School, and Bols Knolls Middle School. Monterey County Regional Fire Protection District (MCRFPD) is the local fire authority for Fire Prevention (non-emergency issues) outside the City limits, per our contract for services agreement. Our findings will be turned over to MCRFPD.

It is the intent of SFD that all non-conforming conditions are made to comply with applicable codes and that approved methods are implemented immediately to reduce the hazards associated with delayed emergency response. All changes in security gates that affect evacuation and/or emergency response access must be approved by the SFD. Applicable Codes pertaining to fencing/gate installation or modification at schools are regulated by, but not limited to the following:

California Fire Code (CFC) & Education Code:

“CFC 503.5.2 Fences and gates. School grounds may be fenced and gates therein may be equipped with locks, provided that safe dispersal areas based on 3 square feet per occupant are located between the school and the fence. Such required safe dispersal areas shall not be located less than 50 feet from school buildings. Every public and private school shall conform with Section 32020 of the Education Code, which states: "The governing board of every public school district, and the governing authority of every private school, which maintains any building used for the instruction or housing of school pupils on land entirely enclosed (except for building walls) by fences or walls, shall, through cooperation with the local law enforcement and fire-protection agencies having

jurisdiction of the area, make provision for the erection of gates in such fences or walls. The gates shall be of sufficient size to permit the entrance of the ambulances, police equipment and fire-fighting apparatus used by the law enforcement and fire-protection agencies. There shall be no less than one such access gate and there shall be as many such gates as needed to assure access to all major buildings and around areas. If such gates are to be equipped with locks, the locking devices shall be designed to permit ready entrance by the use of the chain or bolt-cutting devices with which the local law enforcement and fire-protection agencies may be equipped."

"CFC 503.6 Security gates. The installation of security gates across a fire apparatus access road shall be approved by the fire chief. Where security gates are installed, they shall have an approved means of emergency operation. The security gates and the emergency operation shall be maintained operational at all times. Electric gate operators, where provided, shall be listed in accordance with UL 325. Gates intended for automatic operation shall be designed, constructed and installed to comply with the requirements of ASTM F 2200."

The installation of security gates across required evacuation path, and/or fire apparatus access road shall be approved by the fire chief. To help expedite review, SFD recommends Maintenance Departments submit the completed DSA-810 form, and a site plan to the SFD for review prior to installation of security gates, and review of security gates already installed or that have not been reviewed by SFD.

Some of the common issues with security gates and upgrades not reviewed by SFD include the following:

1. Card key access alone not to be an acceptable fail-safe method for emergency access.
2. Lack of updated access plans. SFD and MCRFPD require current school site plans with primary, and if necessary, secondary vehicle/pedestrian gate access.
 - a. MCRFD is responsible fire prevention authority for the different schools outside the City Limits and shall be the primary security gate reviewer for the following schools: Boronda Meadows and Boronda Continuation School, Gavilan Middle School. Graves School, Lagunita School, and La Joya School.
3. Lack of action plan to bring the non-complaint gates into compliance with Education Code, CFC, UL, and ASTM requirements.
4. The following are options for securing gates:
 - a. Chain and padlock
 - b. Knox key switch override on the outside of the gate. Knox key switch shall be used in conjunction with card key or other automatic opener. Knox key switch available at knoxbox.com
 - c. Knox Box w/ key adjacent to gate, mounted on approved mounting on wall or post.
 - d. 3M Opticom- Remote emergency opening
 - e. If using an electric gate, and loss of power occurs one of the following shall happen:
 - 1) Allow for gate to be pushed open
 - 2) Fail to opened position
 - 3) Approved back up power

5. Electric Gate Operator construction listing/labeling requirements shall be in compliance with **CFC 503.5 Required gates or barricades**. UL 325 and ASTM 2200 standards. UL 325 covers "Entrapment" protection, and ASTM 2200 covers overall safety design, construction, and installation of the different types of automatic gates.

6. SFD shall conduct a pre-construction review that impact fire/medical/police response times. Like a DSA project, SFD recommends the submittal of plans and DSA-810- Local Fire Authority Review Template prior to construction.

http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/fls/DSA-810_rev04-29-12.pdf

7. Dual SFD and MCRFD automatic "Knox" key gate access option for schools outside the city limits where SFD is the initial fire response.

The installation of security gates across fire evacuation path, and/or a fire apparatus access road shall be approved by SFD. To help expedite the review, SFD recommends the submittal of DSA-810 and a site plan for our review prior to installation of security gates, and for review of security gates already installed that have not been reviewed by SFD. Within 30 days from the date of this letter we request copies of your schools emergency access plans and fire safety evacuation plans.

Feel free to contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (831)-758-7466 if you have any questions or comments regarding this SFD notice or to discuss the specifics of the security gates at a school site.