

Lancaster City Fire Specifics for Building Construction Planning

This document is designed to provide general guidance and to answer frequently asked questions pertaining to building construction projects within The City of Lancaster PA. Refer to the 2018 International Fire Code (IFC) for complete requirements.

Address Identification: The address identification shall be legible and placed in a position that is visible from the street or road fronting the property. Numbers shall not be spelled out. Each character shall be not less than 4 inches high with a minimum stroke width of 1 /2 inch.

Fire Department Connections: FDC's shall be a 5" storz fitting. FDC's shall be located on the street side of buildings or facing approved fire apparatus access roads, fully visible and recognizable from the street, fire apparatus access road or nearest point of fire department vehicle access or as otherwise approved by the fire code official. Fire department connections shall be located not less than 18 in. nor more than 48 in. above the level of the adjoining ground, sidewalk, or grade surface. Any FDC installed above 24" will require a 30-degree fitting. Location must be approved by fire code official prior to installation.



FDC Labeling: A metal sign with raised letters not less than 1 inch in size shall be mounted on all fire department connections serving automatic sprinklers, standpipes or fire pump connections. Such signs shall read: AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS or STANDPIPES or TEST CONNECTION or a combination thereof as applicable. Where the fire department connection does not serve the entire building, a sign shall be provided indicating the portions of the building served.



Additionally, the fire department connection shall be indicated by an approved sign mounted above the FDC or in the vicinity of the FDC with an arrow pointing towards the location of the FDC. Such sign shall have the letters "FDC" not less than 6 inches high and words in letters not less than 2 inches high.

Such signs shall be subject to the approval of the fire code official.

Pressure Reducing Valves: Where PRV's are required by design, they must be of the field adjustable style. Before occupancy of the structure, PRV's on all standpipe connections shall be tested and set to 100 psi.



Thread Type: The City of Lancaster requires a 7 Threads Per Inch (7 TPI) thread size on all 2.5" hose connections. All other hose connections are NST.

Key Boxes: The key box shall be of an approved type and shall contain keys to gain necessary access as required by the fire code official. Approved key boxes can be ordered at knoxbox.com under "Lancaster Bur of Fire". The KnoxBox 3200 series and KnoxVault 4400 series are the only approved boxes for use within the City of Lancaster and they must be recessed. The color of the box does not matter. At minimum, a key box is required at the main entrance to the building on the address side. More than one key box may be required with larger, or more complex structures. Key box must be located no more than 60" high. Location must be approved by the fire code official prior to installation.



Elevator Key Box: Elevator key box(es) are required for all new buildings equipped with elevators. Approved elevator key boxes can be ordered at knoxbox.com under "Lancaster Bur of Fire". Currently, Knox Elevator Box 1400 series is the only approved elevator key box within the City of Lancaster. The color of the box does not matter.

The key box shall be mounted at each elevator bank in the lobby nearest to the lowest level of fire department access. The key box shall be mounted 5 feet 6 inches above the finished floor to the right side of the elevator bank.

Contents of the key box are limited to fire service elevator keys, elevator access tools (drop keys etc.), keys (elevator machine room, etc.), and information pertinent to emergency operations (location of machine room or MRL panel, etc.).

In buildings with two or more elevator banks, a single key box shall be permitted to be used where such elevator banks are separated by not more than 30 feet. Additional key boxes shall be provided for each individual elevator or elevator bank separated by more than 30 feet.

Emergency Responder Radio Coverage: New buildings shall have approved radio coverage for emergency responders within the building based on the existing coverage levels of the public safety communication systems utilized by the jurisdiction, measured at the exterior of the building. System shall comply with all requirements of section 510 of the 2018 IFC and NFPA 1221. Technical information and requirements for the emergency responder communications coverage system shall be obtained from Lancaster County-Wide Communications (LCWC). The point of contact @ LCWC is Matthew Shenk mshenk@lcwc911.us, 717-664-1100.



Gate & Key Switches: The installation of security gates across fire apparatus access roads shall have an approved means of emergency operation. Various Knox gate & key switches are found on knoxbox.com and can be added to gate installations. Alternatively, properties can add a Knoxbox in the vicinity of the gate. Other means of emergency gate activation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Standpipes and Stairways During Construction: Where building construction exceeds 40 feet in height, a temporary or permanent stairway shall be provided. As construction progresses, such stairway shall extend to within one floor of the highest point of construction having secured decking or flooring (IFC 3311.1).

In buildings required to have standpipes, not less than one standpipe shall be provided for use during construction. Standpipe shall be installed prior to construction reaching 40 feet in height. As construction progresses, the standpipe shall be extended to within one floor of the highest point of construction having secured decking or flooring (IFC 3313.1).

