



Fire Department
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Fire Lanes

Fire lanes are very important to timely and safe responses of emergency vehicles to commercial properties. They are used not only by firefighting personnel, but also by police and emergency medical responders. The intention is to allow easy and quick access to a building by emergency response personnel.

What Is a Fire Lane?

According to the International Fire Code (IFC 502-503), a fire lane is a road or passageway which provides access for firefighting apparatus to a building. It must be a minimum of 20' wide and it must provide easy access to all portions of the building. It may include portions of parking lots, streets and alleys. It must be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capability and must be designed and maintained to support the load imposed by a fire apparatus.

Am I Required to Provide a Fire Lane for My Business?

Any newly constructed building must be provided with the required fire lanes when construction begins. Existing buildings must maintain their fire lanes as they were required at the time of construction. In addition, some existing buildings may have been required to provide fire lanes since the time of construction. As a rule, buildings with parking lots are generally required to maintain the lane in front of the building as a fire lane. If you are unsure whether your building requires a fire lane, please contact the fire department for assistance.

How Must My Fire Lane Be Marked?

A fire lane should be marked by a yellow curb where curbing is present. If there is curbing on both sides of the lane, both curbs should be painted yellow. In addition, signs should be posted on permanently affixed sign posts which read, "No Parking. Fire Lane."

Who May Use a Fire Lane?

Fire lanes are intended for the use of emergency response vehicles. Other vehicles may use portions of fire lanes as ordinary driving surfaces. However no vehicles (with the exception of emergency response vehicles) are permitted to park or stop in a fire lane.

What Is Considered Parking?

According to Wisconsin State Statute, any vehicle which is stopped at a curb or in a parking area is considered parked. The statute does not differentiate between vehicles which are parked or

simply “standing.” The vehicle is considered parked whether it is occupied or unoccupied.

As a Business Owner, What is My Responsibility with Regard to My Fire Lane?

As a business owner with a fire lane you are required to maintain the fire lane in a drivable condition. You are also required to maintain the signage as well as the yellow paint on the curb (where applicable). In addition, you are required to keep the fire lane open and free from obstructions including parked cars.

What If I Park in a Fire Lane?

Parking in a designated fire lane is a violation of Wisconsin State Statutes. A vehicle parked in a fire lane is subject to being ticketed or impounded.

If you have any questions regarding fire lanes, personnel from
the Superior Fire Department
are available to assist you.