



ADMINISTRATIVE RULING 23-802 CONSTRUCTION IN WATER IMPACT AREAS

APPROVED BY: _____



FIRE MARSHAL

Subject:

2022 Ventura County Fire Code, Section 507 Fire-Flow.
Construction in designated water (fire-flow) impacted areas located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFPD).

Code Requirements:

Ventura County Fire Code (VCFC):

Section 507.1 requires fire-flow for all facilities, buildings, and additions to existing buildings.

Section 507.3 Fire flow requirements shall be in accordance with Appendix B as amended by VCFC or an approved method.

Exemptions to and reductions in the required fire-flow are allowed for specific types of uses and are specified within Fire District Policy 210.

All land subdivision applications require a Water Availability Letter (WAL) before the application can be processed by the Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA). All new buildings that have a water demand require a Will-Serve letter prior to obtaining a building permit. When either of these items are required, they must be signed by the water purveyor's engineer of record and must certify the water system is in compliance with the Ventura County Waterworks Manual (VCWWM).

Discussion:

The current edition of the VCFC has provisions to limit new buildings and additions to existing buildings where the required fire-flow is not available from the water system. Over the past several years, it has become known that some existing water systems cannot supply the required fire-flow and therefore are not in compliance with the requirements of the VCWWM and the VCFC. While the responsibility lies with the water purveyor to meet the requirements, some of the systems in the water

impacted areas are older systems constructed prior to the adoption of the VCWWM and fire-flow requirements and there has been no change to the existing system. Others were designed under the requirements of the VCWWM, but the system has not been maintained to be in compliance with the manual.

In September 2014, the Ventura County Public Works Agency (PWA) adopted the 2nd edition of the VCWWM with input from RMA and the Fire District. Revisions to the manual were made to bring fire-flow requirements in-line with current fire code. Water purveyors began reviewing their systems for compliance with the new edition of the VCWWM. Some purveyors not in compliance with the manual have made upgrades necessary to come into compliance. During this period, the Fire District continues to receive requests for new buildings and additions to existing buildings. This Administrative Ruling addresses both the needs of the community requesting to expand residential buildings and the provision for adequate fire-flow for fire protection of the community. This ruling is based upon current VCFC, VCWWM and applicable County Ordinances.

Requirements:

Residential One and Two-Family Dwellings (Group R-3), including Attached Accessory Building (U):

New buildings and additions to existing buildings are not allowed until the water system is certified and the required fire-flow is provided.

Exception: A one-time addition up to 150 square feet of the existing legally permitted floor area may be allowed.

Note: This exception is not available if the building was previously exempt from fire-flow due to size (under 700 square feet) in accordance with VCFC. These buildings are treated as a new building under VCFC and are required to provide full fire-flow and fire sprinklers.

Detached Accessory Buildings (Group U):

New buildings, additions to existing buildings, or change of use, is not allowed until the water system is certified and the required fire-flow is provided.

Commercial, Industrial and Multi-Family Buildings:

New facilities, buildings and additions to existing buildings are not allowed until the water system is certified and the required fire-flow is provided. This is due to higher fire-flow requirements than residential one and two-family dwellings.