



## Fire Marshal's Office – Fire Code Interpretation

<b>Number</b>	2023-1		
<b>Subject</b>	Additions to Single Family Dwellings		
<b>Code Reference</b>	2018 IFC, Section 503.1.1		
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Wheat Ridge, Arvada, Jefferson County		
<b>Effective Date</b>	6/8/2023	<b>Issued By</b>	Scott Plumer
<b>Revision Date</b>	-	<b>Revised By</b>	-
<b>Approval Date</b>	11/15/2023	<b>Approved By</b>	Steven Parker

*As provided in Section 104.1 of the 2018 International Fire Code, the Fire Code Official has the authority to render interpretations of this code and to adopt policies, procedures, rules, and regulations in order to clarify the application of its provisions.*

### PURPOSE

To provide guidance and code interpretation for when additions are made on an existing single-family dwelling.

### SCOPE

This Administrative interpretation applies to additions made to existing single-family dwellings.

### DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE

- Can a fire apparatus access road be required for an existing single-family dwelling?
- If that road is required and cannot be provided due to existing conditions, can a sprinkler system be required throughout an existing single-family dwelling and in the new addition?

**IFC Section 503.1.1.** Requires approved fire apparatus access roads for "...every facility, building or portion of a building hereafter constructed or moved into or within the jurisdiction." These roads must "...extend to within 150ft of all portions of the facility and all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of the building as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building or facility."

Exception 1.1: where the building is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.1.1, 903.1.2, or 903.1.3.



Exception 1.2: Fire apparatus access roads cannot be installed because of location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades or other similar conditions, and an approved alternative means of fire protection is provided.

Exception 1.3: There are not more than two Group R-3 or U occupancies.

The 2018 IFC commentary states “The Group R-3 facilities noted in Condition 1.3 of Exception 1 include one- and two-family dwellings.... Note that, since Section 903.2.8.1 requires that Group R-3 buildings be equipped throughout with automatic sprinkler systems, this condition is redundant with Condition 1.1. Note also that there is no exception for non-sprinklered buildings built under the IRC.”

Administrative Interpretation 2021-02 states that “AFPD will not accept private driveways to be considered for approved turnarounds or fire apparatus access roads.”

Administrative Interpretation 2021-03 states “It has been decided after discussing the operational capabilities of our Operations Division with the Deputy Chief that the prescriptive code requirement of 150 feet can be increased by 150 feet, to a total dimension of 300 feet.” However, this would only come into consideration if exception 1.1 of section 503.1.1 was being used. If the single-family dwelling is fully sprinklered and there are not more than two of them on a given access road, then this administrative interpretation would not apply.

## **DECISION**

If an existing single-family dwelling will have a building footprint addition constructed, it must meet IFC section 503.1.1. If an existing single-family dwelling will have a building footprint addition constructed, it must meet IFC section 503.1.1. In situations where an additional story is being added and no additional footprint is being added, this interpretation will not apply. If it cannot meet the 150ft dimension requirement, an automatic sprinkler system must be installed throughout the building. Even though residential automatic sprinkler systems have been amended out of the IRC in the jurisdictions referenced above, the relevant sections of the fire code have not been amended therefore, sprinklers will be required. Providing sprinklers in these instances will ensure the safety of the occupants and ensure the ability of the AFPD to provide proper fire protection is not compromised by the addition to the existing building.