

POLICY: FIRE FLOW FOR BUILDINGS

References:

- Title 24, Part 2, California Building Code (CBC) – Section 903
- Title 24, Part 9, California Fire Code (CFC) –
Section 903 & Appendices BB, CC
- NFPA 1142 – Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and
Rural Fire Fighting
- Title 19 CCR – Division 1, Sub-Chapter 1, Article 3,
Section 2.02 (Alternate Means)
- DSA 810: Local Fire Authority Review

Discipline: Fire and Life Safety

A Division of the State Architect (DSA) Policy is a formally established set of governing statements based on law and code objectives, addressing any aspect of DSA's plan & construction review program that is not clearly addressed by code. Policy also may specify administrative or technical requirements that are not yet addressed within Title 24, but are deemed important and necessary to fulfill code objectives in advance of adoption into the code.

Purpose: To provide clarification and the procedure for documenting acceptance of water flow for firefighting and building exposure protection (fire flow, fire hydrant locations, and distribution) by the local fire authority (LFA).

Background: DSA is the authority having jurisdiction for construction projects of public schools (K–12) and community colleges. However, DSA recognizes that the LFA is inherently more familiar than DSA with the water supplies within its jurisdiction and operational procedures used to respond to a fire emergency.

Some jurisdictions may have city or county water mains that extend to the school site and some may not have this infrastructure. Some LFA may have water tenders or water drafting resources that are routinely used in lieu of water mains. DSA will accept the LFA water supply requirements for firefighting and building exposure protection. Installations must comply with the minimum requirements of the California Fire Code (CFC), or, if alternate means for water supply for firefighting and building exposure protection are proposed (see Section 2.2.1), the design professional shall coordinate and gain approval from LFA and obtain a signature from the school district official in Section 4 of form DSA-810.

To facilitate plan approval, the form [DSA-810: Local Fire Authority Review](#) is required as part of the plan submittal package.

1. POLICY:

- 1.1** It shall be the policy of DSA to accept the LFA approval of proposed or existing water flow, and the number and placement of hydrants. The approval by the LFA is recorded by the completed form DSA-810 imaged onto the site plan. The LFA approval indicates to DSA that the on-site water distribution system meets the minimum requirements of the CFC or that the proposed alternate means are acceptable.

The LFA may decline to review fire flow by placing a check mark in the NR column for the item (Section 3 on form DSA-810) and providing a comment in the “comments” section.

- 1.2** DSA shall review the submitted plans for adequate water flow and pressure for proposed automatic fire sprinkler systems (AFSS) to ensure that the infrastructure (including size of required tanks and/or fire pumps), piping, water flow and pressures are sufficient to operate the AFSS. (See DSA [Policy 10-01](#) Plan Submittal Requirements: Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems.)

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2. PROCEDURE:

2.1 Preparation: Prior to submitting a site plan to DSA as part of a project submittal, the design professional shall meet and consult with the LFA to determine that jurisdiction's ability to respond to a fire event, and to establish the requirements for water flow for firefighting and building exposure protection.

Where water flow minimum requirements cannot be met in accordance with California Fire Code, the design professional shall notify the school district of the alternate means for firefighting and building exposure protection. The school district official shall sign the Local Fire Authority Review form DSA-810, Section 4, acknowledging that the district understands and accepts this alternate means.

2.2 Site Plan: The design professional shall provide a site plan with all required information, as noted on form DSA-810: Local Fire Authority Review for LFA approval.

2.2.1 Alternate means and methods allowed by Title 19, CBC sections 104.10 and 104.11, CFC Appendices BB, CC, NFPA 1142, etc., for firefighting shall be submitted to the LFA for consideration and acceptance.

Alternate means and methods shall be equal to, but not more restrictive than, the minimum code requirements.

Alternate means shall be requested in writing to the LFA.

If the LFA chooses not to review, DSA requires the design professional to submit the written request for alternate means to DSA at the time of original project submittal.

If an alternate means based on other water sources is approved by the LFA, the design professional will obtain a signature on Section 4 of the DSA-810 from the school district official.

If the LFA declines to review, DSA will not review other alternate means that involve drafting, water tenders, etc. DSA can only review alternate means based on on-site water storage.

2.2.2 Per Hall v. City of Taft, local building ordinances do not apply to school project sites. Minimum code and standards requirements will be enforced, as adopted by the California Building Code, Chapter 35. However, the connection or tie in to city or county utilities on the public side of the project shall comply with local specifications and ordinances. It is the school district's responsibility to identify and comply with all such applicable statutes and regulations.

2.3 Items Reviewed but not approved by the LFA: Where the LFA does not accept the design professional's proposal; the LFA must provide comments in Section 8 of the form DSA-810. DSA's regional office Fire & Life Safety staff will review and evaluate the proposal, giving consideration to LFA comments on the issues, and, as the authority having final jurisdiction, will make a determination based on minimum requirements found in the CFC or, for alternate means, NFPA 1142.

2.4 Submittal to DSA: The design professional shall ensure that the LFA approved site plan is submitted to DSA as part of the original project submittal. Site plans with the LFA review must coincide with the final site plan submitted to DSA. Any changes that affect a previous approval must be re-submitted to the LFA (and the school district, if an alternative means is proposed) for review and approval prior to back check.

All information, as required on the form DSA-810, shall be permanently included on the site plan when submitted to DSA. This information will be part of the archived record set.