



FIRE-MEDICAL DEPT

Memorandum

Date: March 14, 2017

To: Gated Storage Facility Operators

From: City of Peoria Fire-Medical Department – Fire Prevention Division

Subject: Automatic Vehicle Gates and Exiting

It has come to the attention of the Fire Department, through some recent incidents, that there are some potential issues regarding access through security gates at existing storage facilities. This memorandum will detail what the requirements are for gate access into and out of your facility. Some of these changes may have occurred over time and have not been previously noted. The requirement for exiting is paramount and has always been in the Code and is required to be provided and maintained in all existing facilities. The pertinent Code sections have been provided at the end of this memorandum.

AUTOMATIC VEHICLE GATES

Automatic vehicle gates are required to have emergency access controls and safety features for Fire Department use. These can include the following.

- a. Traffic pre-emption device to allow the fire apparatus to open the gates with a strobe.
- b. Key switch for emergency operation.
- c. Battery back-up in the event of a power loss.
- d. Safety loops to prevent gates from closing on fire apparatus or vehicles.
- e. Vehicle detection loop for exiting.

The issue that has come to the attention of the Fire Department is that some storage facilities have programmed the automatic vehicle gates to not open after a certain time in the evening or have removed the vehicle detection loop and have installed a keypad for exiting to limit customer access. At no time can this programming or changes prevent the Fire Department or Police Department from entering or exiting the facility in the event of an incident or emergency. Gate operation to enter the facility will be verified during inspections to ensure that the gates open upon activation of either the traffic pre-emption device or by way of the key switch and provides the functions described above.

For exiting, the programming or function of the gates cannot limit the Fire Department and/or Police Department. For facilities that have changed the gate functions to limit access will be required to install an additional Knox key switch on the inside of the gate to allow the Fire Department and/or Police Department to exit the facility should the gates be closed. This requirement comes from the emergency operations in section 503.6.



PERSONNEL GATE

The other issue regarding exiting from a storage facility is the availability of the personnel exit. Some storage facilities have chained or locked these gates closed to prevent use. Both the Building Code and the Fire Code require that persons exiting a structure be able to freely make their way to the public way at any time per section 1030.2. The definition of a public way in the Code would be the public sidewalk along the street. This will require that any time the facility was designed with a personnel gate that it has to have the ability to open from the inside without the need for any special tools, skills or knowledge as required in section 1008.1.9. The gate can be secured from the outside to prevent persons from entering but exiting must be available at all times.

For questions regarding this matter, please feel free to speak to your Fire Inspector or contact the Fire Prevention office.

Peoria Fire-Medical Department – Fire Prevention Division
8351 West Cinnabar Avenue
Peoria, Arizona 85345
(623) 773-7279 Main Number
(623) 773-7295 Fax Number

503.6 Security gates.

The installation of security gates across a fire apparatus access road shall be approved by the fire chief. Where security gates are installed, they shall have an approved means of emergency operation. The security gates and the emergency operation shall be maintained operational at all times. Electric gate operators, where provided, shall be listed in accordance with UL 325. Gates intended for automatic operation shall be designed, constructed and installed to comply with the requirements of ASTM F 2200.

1008.1.9 Door operations.

Except as specifically permitted by this section egress doors shall be readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.

1030.2 Reliability.

Required exit accesses, exits and exit discharges shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency when the building area served by the means of egress is occupied. An exit or exit passageway shall not be used for any purpose that interferes with a means of egress.

PUBLIC WAY. A street, alley or other parcel of land open to the outside air leading to a street, that has been deeded, dedicated or otherwise permanently appropriated to the public for public use and which has a clear width and height of not less than 10 feet (3048 mm).