

EAST COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE
Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

SUBJECT: Emergency Access Policy

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APPROVED BY: 
Board Chair

REVIEWED: _____ BY: _____

Personnel and equipment of East County Fire and Rescue are in many instances required to gain access to the scene of an emergency by traversing privately owned access routes. In many instances the access routes include privately constructed roadways, driveways and bridges that have not been constructed or maintained in accordance with state or county standards.

While the Board of Commissioners of the District recognizes the responsibility to provide emergency services to all persons and properties within the District, it also recognizes its responsibility to use reasonable means to protect District personnel and equipment from unreasonable risks that could result in injury to persons or damage to property.

In order to provide reasonable protection to District personnel and equipment without impairing the District's ability to respond to the scene of emergencies in all parts of the District, it is the policy of the District to impose the following requirements and conditions;

1. The District shall require that all privately owned bridges used for vehicular access to private property be inspected by a licensed engineer at least every five years to determine the load carrying capacity of the bridge. The maximum weight limit of the bridge, as determined by the engineering inspection, shall be conspicuously posted on or adjacent to the bridge. The property owner shall furnish a copy of the engineering inspection report to the District.
2. In the event any bridge shall not be inspected and posted as required above, or in the event the weight of District vehicles shall exceed the posted limit, the District emergency vehicles shall not be permitted to cross such bridge.
3. In the event the District should discover any private roads, over which District vehicles would require to travel in the event of an emergency, that are deemed to be unsafe or unusable in the opinion of District personnel because of road grade, road width, unstable surface conditions, vehicle height limitations or other factors, the District vehicles shall not be permitted to travel on such roads.
4. District personnel, who cannot cross a bridge, shall attempt to find alternate means to deliver needed service(s) to customer(s).

5. In the event that District personnel shall become aware of any unsafe or un-posted bridge, or unsafe private roadways, the District shall notify the reputed owners of all properties served by such bridge or roadway in writing, as soon as it is reasonably possible.