



CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin

Addressing Requirements

A properly posted building address is essential for your safety - Fire, Police, and EMS personnel may need to find your home or business quickly during an emergency. It is difficult for emergency vehicles, utility trucks, postal and delivery trucks to find homes and businesses that are improperly posted.

The adopted Fire & Building Codes require the posting of your address numbers/letters to be:

- Minimum of 4 inches tall for all properties. We recommend 6-8" tall for commercial properties.
- Made of a durable material and placed on a contrasting background.
- Placed immediately above or to the side of the entry door so the numbers are clearly visible from the street.
- Buildings more than 50 feet from the roadway should include numbers at the street, or other appropriate place, so the address is clearly visible from the street.
- If the address is posted on a different street, such as a corner building fronting two streets, the street name must be included on the posting.

When suite numbers or letters are assigned they are considered part of your address:

- Suite designations should never be larger than your address numbers.
- The suite numbers or letters should be clearly distinguishable from your address. As an example, if your street address is 1010 and your suite identification is 10, the posted address should be displayed in two lines: Line 1 "1010" and Line 2 "Suite 10".
- Buildings with multiple suites can utilize a single address posting on the building that is readily visible from the street (recommend 8" tall minimum) and then clearly label each space. As an example, the building address of "1010" is prominently posted and each individual suite or space is labeled such as "Suite 10". This will provide a clear distinction between the physical address and the suite identifier.

Other considerations:

- Be sure address numbers can be seen at night - properly lighting your address increases visibility.
- Reflective numbers are best.
- Numbers on the mailbox should not replace numbers on your home or business.
- Keep address numbers clearly visible throughout the year. Remember that emergency vehicles may sit up higher than automobiles, and low hanging limbs can obstruct their view.
- Replace numbers that are faded, painted, or damaged.
- Bigger is better, the size criteria is the minimum acceptable size. Larger numbers greatly improve visibility.
- Make sure your address number is correct before posting: you can contact the GIS department at 843-805-3230 with any questions regarding your address assignment.