



# Public Works Department

## Transportation Engineering Division

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### **Policy Guidelines for No-Parking Zone in front of Fire Hydrants**

Adopted by the Traffic Advisory Committee  
Last Update on February 8, 2006

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

The City of Napa Public Works Department (PWD) receives numerous requests from local citizens and residents who wish to have the curb in front of a fire hydrant painted red.

PWD's policies and procedures on traffic control devices are based on the exact language from California Vehicle Code (CVC) <sup>1</sup>, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and its California Supplement <sup>2</sup>. Traffic control devices include signal lights, traffic signs, and paint markings. PWD follows standard professional engineering practices as prescribed in the MUTCD and its California Supplement. Effective May 20, 2004, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) adopted the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) 2003*—as amended by the *MUTCD 2003 California Supplement*—to prescribe uniform standards and specifications for all official traffic control devices in California. This action was taken pursuant to the provisions of the California Vehicle Code Section 21400 and the recommendation of the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC).

#### **I. GENERAL POLICY ON NO-PARKING ZONES IN FRONT OF FIRE HYDRANTS**

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) provides that “only those official traffic control devices that conform to the uniform standards and specifications promulgated by the Department of Transportation shall be placed upon a street or highway...”. Hence, PWD follows standard professional engineering practices as prescribed in the MUTCD and its California Supplement.

In situations where the MUTCD and its California Supplement do not provide detailed guidance on roadway markings relevant to a citizen request or defer the engineering decision to the professional judgment of a traffic engineer, PWD will follow these policy guidelines. PWD prepared these policy guidelines to help the Traffic Advisory Committee in making its recommendation on the appropriate modifications to existing roadway signing and striping used for traffic control in response to citizen requests while considering larger and citywide interests.

PWD reserves complete and total discretion on the appropriate pavement markings and traffic signage on all public streets maintained by the City of Napa. The general procedures in these policy guidelines do not, in any shape, manner or form, pre-empt the professional

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<sup>1</sup> State of California 2005 Vehicle Code Through the 2004 Legislative Session

<sup>2</sup> *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*, 2003 Edition, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

engineering judgment of the Public Works Department as they relate to locally-maintained public streets.

## II. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR NO-PARKING ZONE IN FRONT OF FIRE HYDRANTS

Section 22514 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC) provides the following:

*No person shall stop, park, or leave standing any vehicle within 15 feet of a fire hydrant except as follows:*

- (a) *If the vehicle is attended by a licensed driver who is seated in the front seat and who can immediately move such vehicle in case of necessity.*
- (b) *If the local authority adopts an ordinance or resolution reducing that distance. If the distance is less than 10 feet total length when measured along the curb or edge of the street, the distance shall be indicated by signs or markings.*
- (c) *If the vehicle is owned or operated by a fire department and is clearly marked as a fire department vehicle.*

### A. Installation of New No-Parking Zones

**The City of Napa Public Works Department adopts the CVC requirement that a no-parking zone in front of a fire hydrant extends 15 feet from the fire hydrant (or a total of 30 feet covering both directions) without the need for any signs or markings for legal enforceability.**

**The above general rule for the no-parking zone in front of a fire hydrant allows for the following two exceptions:**

- 1. The installation of signs or markings (e.g. red-painted curb) may be allowed where there is a field-verified limitation to the visibility of the fire hydrant from a driver's perspective within the 30-foot no-parking zone. At such locations, no-parking signs or markings may be installed up to 15 feet from the fire hydrant. The length of the no-parking zone should be balanced with the on-street parking demand in the area, particularly in the Downtown area and other commercial corridors.**

**The limitation to the visibility of the fire hydrant within the 30-foot no-parking zone may include landscaping, street furniture, utilities, front porches, bus stops, and exceptionally high usage of on-street parking (e.g. 95% parking utilization) during peak period, among others.**

- 2. No-parking zones in front of fire hydrants may also be requested by the Police Chief or the Fire Chief for locations where enforcement problems involving the violation of no-parking zones in front of fire hydrants have been reported, particularly in commercial and high-density residential**

**areas. The no-parking zone may be installed using signs or markings, acknowledging the preference of the Police Chief or Fire Chief.**

**The installation of a no-parking zone requested by the Police Chief or Fire Chief will be implemented according to the standard procedures for traffic change orders and work orders, which require the unanimous approval of the Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments.**

**This policy guideline statement shall be reviewed by the Traffic Advisory Committee in six months or one year from the adoption date, based on the request of the either the Police Chief or Fire Chief.**

#### **B. Maintenance of Existing No-Parking Zones**

Existing red curb markings adjacent to fire hydrants that have become faded and follow the above guidelines will be refreshed by the Public Works Department as needed. Existing red curb markings adjacent to fire hydrants that do not meet the above guidelines will be allowed to fade and will not be refreshed.