Driveway Access for Emergency Vehicles

Emergency personnel try their best to respond to calls in a timely manner, often while negotiating difficult terrain. Planning for access by emergency vehicles improves safety for homeowners and their families by providing for a more efficient response by firefighters and other emergency personnel arriving on the scene. This is especially important in the more rural areas of the Fire District, where response times may be longer.

An ambulance or a fire truck is wider, longer, and taller than a personal vehicle. Many of these vehicles have radio antennas and other equipment fastened to the roofs that can be damaged from low hanging tree limbs. In some cases, low hanging tree limbs may make it physically impossible for emergency vehicles to even reach your residence.

Driveway Width and Height

In order for emergency vehicles to safely access your property, your driveway must have a clean, dry all-weather surface that is able to provide adequate support for large, heavy vehicles.

- Driveways should have an unobstructed vertical clearance of 14-feet. This may require limbing and/or removing trees and brush to provide the necessary vertical clearance.

- Driveways should have a 12-foot wide drivable surface, with a 2-foot clear zone on each side of the driveway (16-feet overall). This may require the removal of rocks and other material to provide adequate horizontal clearance.

- Sharp turns are also discouraged. The minimum curve on a driveway should be a 30-foot radius.

It is in your own best interests to have adequate emergency vehicle access to your property. If a vehicle cannot safely enter and leave your property, it may cause a critical delay in response. If you have any questions as to whether a driveway provides adequate access for emergency vehicles, please contact the Dousman Fire District at 262-965-2262.