

**Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES)**

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# Street Addresses and Road Names

DDES Customer  
Information Bulletin #**11****• FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS •**

*Visit the DDES Web site at  
[www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits)  
for more information*

King County DDES has created customer information bulletins to inform the general public about the effect of codes and regulations on their projects. These bulletins are not intended to be complete statements of all laws and rules and should not be used as substitutes for them. If conflicts and questions arise, current codes and regulations are final authority. Because the codes and regulations may be revised or amended at any time, consult King County staff to be sure you understand all requirements before beginning work. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the project meets all requirements of applicable codes and regulations.

For alternate formats, call 206-296-6600.

The Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) is the agency responsible for assigning road designations (names) and building numbers to the primary entrances of all buildings in unincorporated King County. DDES also reassigns addresses that are found to be incorrect. Because each city has its own addressing system, the information in this bulletin does not apply to areas within city limits.

**Why are addresses so important?**

An accurate and easily visible address is vital for rapidly locating a home or business in any emergency requiring fire, life, and/or safety services. It also promotes efficient mail and parcel delivery to businesses and residences. During construction, an address that is posted where it can easily be seen also speeds up the inspection process.

**When are addresses assigned?**

Addresses are assigned as part of the building permit process. Many addresses in formal subdivisions (comprising five or more lots) are assigned before the building permit application, usually just prior to recording of the subdivision. However, addresses for corner lots and lots with large road frontages require a site plan in order to assign the final address. Addresses in short subdivisions (four or fewer lots) and unplatted property are not preassigned.

For single-family residences, addressing staff review the permit application and site plan, determining the building and access locations. House addresses are generally assigned very early in the building permit process.

For commercial projects (apartments, condominiums, townhouses, shopping centers, strip malls, mobile home parks, etc.) a temporary address is assigned at the time of initial permit application. This is NOT the final address. Addressing staff will analyze the project and determine the final address or addresses after the plans are considered final.

**Note: The Health Department and some utilities estimate addresses before building permit application. These are approximate only and are not official addresses.**

### How to get address or street name information

For address information, call the **DDES Address Information Line at 206-296-6628** (24-hour voice mail). Even though this line contains a recorded message, the calls are monitored closely and returned in a timely manner. Be sure to leave applicant name, telephone number, and one or more of the following:

- Tax Account or Parcel Number
- Address in question
- Building Permit Number
- Legal description.

Occasionally, citizen or neighborhood groups request a custom street or address change having nothing to do with a building or development proposal. DDES will consider these requests and bills the review time at the department's standard hourly rate.

### What if an address is incorrect?

It is very important to have an address corrected as soon as possible. Incorrect addresses can cause confusion, inconvenience, and life-threatening delays in emergency response times. In some cases, an incorrect address can affect response time for adjacent addresses as well. To get an address corrected or to verify the accuracy of an address, call the DDES Address Information Line at 206-296-6628.

### Where should address numbers be posted?

Having an address clearly posted and visible from the street will help emergency personnel locate a residence quickly. Chapter 16.08.050 of the King County Code (KCC) requires the following:

1. Address numbers must be posted in a conspicuous place over or near the principal entrance or entrances. If the entrance(s) cannot be seen easily from the nearest adjoining street, the address numbers must be placed in another conspicuous place on the building or structure so that the address numbers can easily be seen from the nearest adjoining street.
2. If the building or structure cannot be easily seen or is greater than 50 feet from the nearest adjoining street, the address numbers must be placed on a portion of the site that is clearly visible and no more than 20 feet from the street.
3. The address numbers must be legible figures, not less than three inches high for residential uses, and not less than five inches high for commercial uses. Numbers must contrast with the color of the structure upon which they are placed and either be illuminated during periods of darkness, or reflective, so they are easily visible at night.

King County Ordinance #8766 requires that approved address numbers be placed on all new and existing buildings.

### Rules to help locate addresses in unincorporated King County

1. AVENUES are always "North-South" roads.
2. STREETS are always "East-West" roads.
3. It is also possible to determine whether the road is considered "East-West" or "North-South" from the placement of the directional suffix or prefix:
  - "East-West" roads have a directional prefix. For example:
    - SE Kent-Kangley Road
    - NE Union Hill Road
    - SE Klahanie Boulevard
    - SE 416th Street
    - NE Woodinville-Duvall Road
    - SE 208th Place
    - S 272nd Court

- **“North-South”** roads have a directional suffix. For example:
  - Vashon Highway SW
  - Mountain View Road NE
  - 228th Avenue NE
  - Snoqualmie-Valley Road NE
  - 108th Court SE
  - Kelley Road NE
  - 148th Lane SE

**Address numbers increase in different directions, depending on the area of unincorporated King County in which the building is located:**

- In the SOUTH and SOUTHEAST areas of the County, numbers increase going South and East;
- In the SOUTHWEST area of the County, numbers increase going South and West;
- In the NORTHEAST area of the County, numbers increase going North and East;
- EVEN numbers are located on the NORTH side of East-West roads and on the EAST side of North-South roads;
- ODD numbers are located on the SOUTH side of East-West roads and on the WEST side of North-South roads; and
- It is very important to use the complete street name, including the street type (ST, PL, CT, etc.) and the directional suffix or prefix (SE, NE, etc.).

**What city and ZIP code are used for mailing purposes?**

Call the United States Postal Service for postal city and ZIP code information or access their Web site at <http://www.usps.gov>. (See the blue information pages of the phone book.)

**Other bulletins and telephone numbers that may be helpful**

Bulletin 1	Building and Development Permit Phone Numbers
Bulletin 7	Mobile Home Permits
Bulletin 8	Commercial and Multi-Family Building Permits
Bulletin 9	Obtaining a Residential Building Permit
Bulletin 12	Residential Building Permit Process
Bulletin 17A	Zoning Code: Overview and Summary

These and other DDES bulletins are available via the department Web site at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits).

206-296-6600	DDES Permit Center
206-296-6628	DDES Address Information Line



**Be sure to visit our Web site at:**  
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King County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require an accommodation to attend a meeting (two weeks' notice) or require this information in Braille, audiocassette, or large print, please call 206-296-6600 or TTY 206-296-7217.