

### *Access Delays Help!*

What is the value of a second? Many people never evaluate the value of a second until the day they have to pick up the phone and dial 911 in order to save their property or a life of someone who is on their property. The value of a second begins to add up when the fire department is unable to access your property and is forced to leave their apparatus on a main road and walk themselves and equipment up to your home.

The Bloom Township Fire Department is committed to providing prompt and efficient service to all the citizens who reside in our fire district. We take pride in getting to all emergencies quickly and safely with a mission to save life and property. Restricted access delays our ability to effectively respond to a residence in the event of an emergency which may lead to unnecessary loss to life and property.

The term "restricted access" is used by The Bloom Township Fire Department to describe residential road/driveway accesses that will slow, or prevent, emergency access by firefighters. Overgrown road and driveways, homes served by unrated private bridges, and road and driveways that are too narrow for fire apparatus to navigate are some of the major causes of emergency delays.

In order to maximize the value of a second, residents should evaluate the access to their property from the main street by asking the following questions:

1. Does the roadway/driveway have a vertical clearance of 13 feet 6 inches?
2. Does the roadway/driveway for three or more dwellings have an unobstructed driving surface no less than 20 feet wide?
3. Does the roadway/driveway for two or less dwellings have an unobstructed driving surface no less than 12 feet wide?
4. Does the roadway/driveway support the minimum imposed load by fire apparatus of 50,000 pounds and has a surface that is easily distinguishable from the surrounding area and permits all-weather driving capabilities?
5. Does the roadway/driveway cross a bridge? If so, has the bridge been certified to support at least 50,000 pounds and is at least 12 feet wide?
6. Is the roadway/driveway properly signed from a main road with a reflective address sign?
7. Is the roadway/driveway entry close to a 90 degree angle and have turnouts on both ends wide enough, usually around 20 feet to allow a long truck with a large turning radius into your driveway?
8. Does the roadway/driveway entry have a gate? Is the gate far enough back to not obstruct the fire apparatus from turning into the driveway and does it restrict us from making emergency access to your residence?

It is much easier to take the time today to evaluate your property access instead of waiting until you are under the pressure of explaining to a 911 operator what your emergency is and how to get emergency responders safely up to your residence.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding restricted access, please contact The Bloom Township Fire Department Chief, Terry Gill at (614) 837-5530.

The Bloom Township Fire Department will make every effort to assist you in the event of an emergency; however, we may not be as effective as we normally would due to restrictions beyond our control. Seconds do count and you can add real value to your seconds in an emergency by making sure you are not a "restricted access" resident in the event of an emergency.