



Street Addresses and Road Names

The Department of Local Services, Permitting Division (Permitting) is responsible for assigning road designations (names) and building numbers to buildings in unincorporated King County. Permitting also reassigns addresses that are found to be incorrect.

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 helps contractors and building inspectors.

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, 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 temporary and are not official addresses.

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.

Where should address numbers be posted?

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

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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.

Rules to help locate addresses in unincorporated King County

AVENUES are always “North-South” roads.

STREETS are always “East-West” roads.

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

SE Klahanie Boulevard

NE Woodinville-Duvall Road

S 272nd Court

NE Union Hill Road

SE 416th Street

SE 208th Place

“North-South” roads have a directional suffix. For example:

Vashon Highway SW

228th Avenue NE

108th Court SE

148th Lane SE

Mountain View Road NE

Snoqualmie-Valley Road NE

Kelley Road NE

Continued

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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](#) or their web site for postal city and ZIP code information.

Also be aware that a postal “city” address does not necessarily mean that the address is located within the boundary of the named city. For example, a “Maple Valley” address may be located in unincorporated King County or in the city of Maple Valley.

Additional Resources

King County [Department of Local Services, Permitting Division](#)

- [Approximate or Temporary Address Information](#)
- [Property Research Guide](#) and [Property Research Video](#)
- [Permit Fees](#)

King County Department of Local Services, Roads Division

- [Road Design and Construction Standards](#)

[King County Code](#)

