I am missing caps on the Fire Department Connection, what are the requirements for new caps?

Missing caps on fire department connections is a common point of failure for the fire protection systems. The International Fire Code (section 912.4.1, 2015 edition) requires locking fire department connection caps to be installed. The City of Des Moines has adopted the International Fire Code and therefore, wherever caps are found to be missing or where new fire department connections are installed, locking caps are required to be installed.

Locking caps can be purchased online: www.knoxbox.com (item #3042 or #3043 will fit most fire department connections within the City of Des Moines). If you prefer to order through the mail an application can be acquired at the Fire Department Administration building (2715 Dean Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50317). Once you receive the caps, you will need to contact the Fire Prevention Bureau (515-283-4240) to have a fire inspector come out and install the caps (they require a specialized key). Once the caps are in place, you will be in compliance with that section of the fire code!

I was told that my address needs to be visible from the street, what are the requirements on address numbers?

The fire department needs to be able to locate your building should an emergency occur. Having your address numbers plainly visible is critical to us being able to locate your building. The International Fire Code (section 505.1, 2015 edition) requires new and existing buildings to have approved address numbers. The City of Des Moines has adopted the International Fire Code and therefore, approved numbers shall be:

1. Visible from the street
2. Contrasting in color to their background
3. A minimum of 4 inches high and a minimum stroke width of .5 inches
4. If the building is not visible from the road, then a sign shall be required to direct the fire department to the appropriate address.

Installing address numbers as required above may save valuable time in the event of an emergency, please make sure your address complies with these requirements. Ensuring your address meets the above requirements means you will be in compliance with that section of the fire code!

I was told to put signs on the fire doors in my building, what are the requirements for those signs?

Many buildings are allowed to be built larger than typically allowed by code due to the addition of fire walls. Fire walls frequently contain doors to allow for passage between the different areas of the building. These doors must remain “normally” closed to preserve the integrity of the fire wall. Some doors can be held open by electronic devices that are wired into the fire alarm system. The International Fire Code 2015 (section 703.2.1, 2015 edition) requires fire doors to be maintained and to have signs to alert the occupants to whether or not the doors should be kept closed. Additionally, fire doors and smoke barrier doors shall not be blocked or obstructed, or otherwise made inoperable. The City of Des Moines has adopted the International Fire Code and therefore, fire door signs shall be:

1. Contrasting in color to their background
2. Letters shall be not less than 1 inch in height
3. For doors designed to be kept normally open: FIRE DOOR—DO NOT BLOCK.
4. For doors designed to be kept normally closed: FIRE DOOR—KEEP CLOSED.

Any comments or questions regarding the above information may be submitted to:

Fire Prevention Bureau
City of Des Moines Fire Department
2715 Dean Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50317
Office: (515) 283-4240
Fax: (515) 283-4907
Email: firedept@dmgov.org