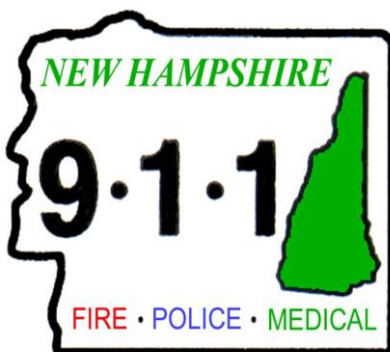


## Addressing Standards Guide



Prepared by  
State of New Hampshire  
Department of Safety  
Division of Emergency Services and Communications

June 2013

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## **Purpose**

**A central goal of the New Hampshire Division of Emergency Services and Communications (DESC) Data Operations Unit is to eliminate possible confusion for all emergency personnel when responding to an emergency call.**

The intention of this document is to clearly catalogue for all parties involved in the addressing process or the standards used by the DESC when formulating addressing recommendations. Time is a critical factor in the delivery of emergency services, and can mean the difference between life and death. A confusing, misleading or ambiguous addressing system could slow response times, possibly with disastrous consequences. To help ensure that New Hampshire emergency calls receive the fastest emergency response possible, the DESC has developed the following addressing standards because a clear, rational, and unambiguous addressing system will help minimize both response time and errors.

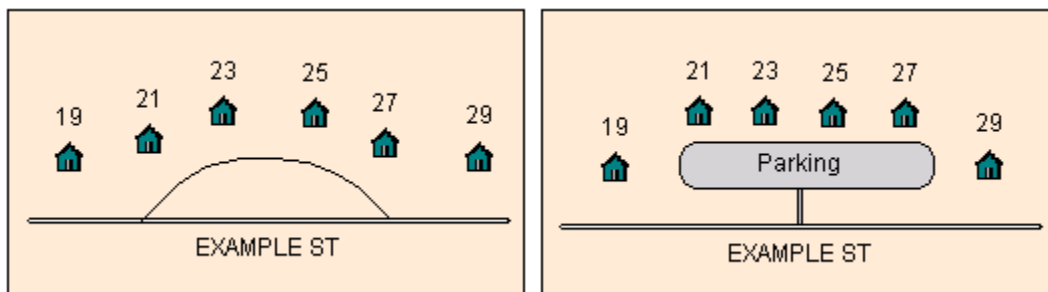
All of the standards found in this document have been adopted from the addressing standards of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). Many of these standards have been expanded upon to meet the needs of New Hampshire, with its mixture of urban and rural settings, and its sometimes irregular road network. These standards will not address every situation encountered in a given municipality; instead they are intended to serve as a guide through which DESC personnel will evaluate both typical and atypical situations.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations that the DESC provides to a municipality are designed to help improve the local addressing system. In the State of New Hampshire each city or town is responsible for the naming of the roads and the addressing of the buildings within its jurisdiction (RSA 231:133 and RSA 231:133-a). As the naming and addressing authority, the municipality can adopt any naming or addressing system it chooses that does not conflict with the pertinent RSA's. Because the naming of streets and the addressing of buildings are a municipality's responsibility, the DESC can only make addressing recommendations to the municipality. The municipality can then choose to adopt those recommendations or institute some other system of their own devising.

## Streets

- It is the recommendation of the DESC to have a municipality-wide standard for which side of the road odd and even addresses are assigned. The strong preference of the DESC is to have odds on the left side and evens on the right side, however the opposite is also acceptable. Regardless of which method is chosen, the odd/even standard should be consistent throughout the entire community
- If a section of road is impassable, creating two separate segments each of which is mutually independent, each of these disconnected sections should receive its own unique road name.
- Any road, either publicly or privately maintained, or in a development such as an apartment complex, which may be traversed by an emergency service vehicle, and provide access to three or more addressable structures should be named and assigned address ranges.
  - Exception: Short drives and shared parking areas providing access to three or more structures that are all clearly visible from the main road, and which present no questions regarding the sequence of the structures may be addressed from the main road.



## Street Naming

Each street within a municipality should be given its own unique road name to prevent confusion on the part of emergency responders. In the case of a new road, the municipality is prohibited from choosing a name “which is already in use, or which is confusingly similar to any such existing name or which otherwise might delay the location of any address in an emergency” per RSA 231:133.

In the case of existing road names which are identical or confusingly similar, the DESC recommends that the municipality rename one or more of these roads to eliminate the

potential confusion in responding to an emergency at these locations. However, the municipality is not bound by the RSA to make any changes to road names that were assigned before August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

When naming or renaming roads, the municipality should take the following recommendations into consideration:

- Avoid duplicate street names. A duplicate street name is one in which the main part of the name is shared by more than one street, even if the designators, or directional information is different. Road names can be considered duplicate even if they are spelled differently when they are phonetically identical. SMITH ST, SMYTH ST, SMITH RD, NORTH SMITH ST, SMITH ST SOUTH, SMITH ST EXT are all duplicate road names.
- Avoid confusingly similar street names. A confusingly similar street name is one in which either a large part of the name is shared by more than one street, or the names of more than one street are phonetically similar. OLD COUNTRY RD and COUNTRY LN would be similar sounding road names, as would COUNTRY LN and COUNTY LN and LAUREL AV and LAUREN AV.
- If the road is continuous, avoid changing names at an intersection or a curve or some other point. Also if a road continues through an intersection into diverse directions, the road name should only continue in one of these directions. The other road, or roads, would be their own entities requiring separate, unique identifying names.
- Avoid family names or individual's names, especially living persons and politicians.
- Street names should not contain any special characters such as hyphens, apostrophes, or dashes.
- All road names should contain a suffix which complies with the USPS Postal Standards [Publication 28](#).
- Avoid the use of directional's and USPS standard suffixes as road/street names (e.g. EAST ST , NORTH BLVD and PLAZA LN)

- All words within the main body of a street name should be spelled out completely and not abbreviated. This includes valid street suffixes and cardinal directions which are part of the main body of the name, rather than modifiers of the street name. Examples of street names which meet this criteria include WEST ALTON MARINA RD (west in this street name refers to the locality of West Alton, rather than the western section of ALTON MARINA RD), FIRE LANE 24 (LANE is not a designator in this situation), KEARSARGE MOUNTAIN RD (MOUNTAIN should not be abbreviated MTN).

## Street Numbering

Address ranges describe the valid addresses on each side of the street for a given road or segment of road. Address ranges should be created and maintained for all roads through the use of a distance based system in which one address is generated on each side of the street for every distance interval (increment). The DESC recommends the use of a fifty (50) foot increment in New Hampshire municipalities. Using a 50 foot increment, a road 4173 feet in length would yield a range of 1/2 to 167/168.

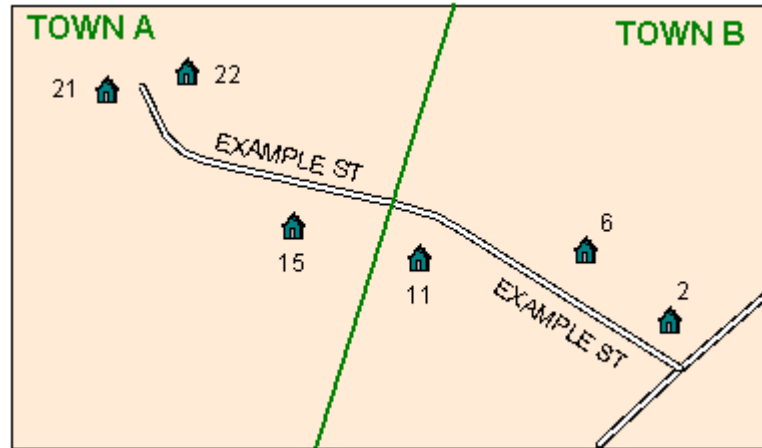
- Exception: In high density areas where 50 feet is not adequate a 10 (ten) foot increment is recommended.

*Address ranges help to form the Master Street Address Guide (MSAG). The MSAG is a data set containing all of the street names in a municipality with each street's address range. Accurate and up to date address ranges will help to ensure that the appropriate emergency service agency is dispatched to a street when the need arises there.*

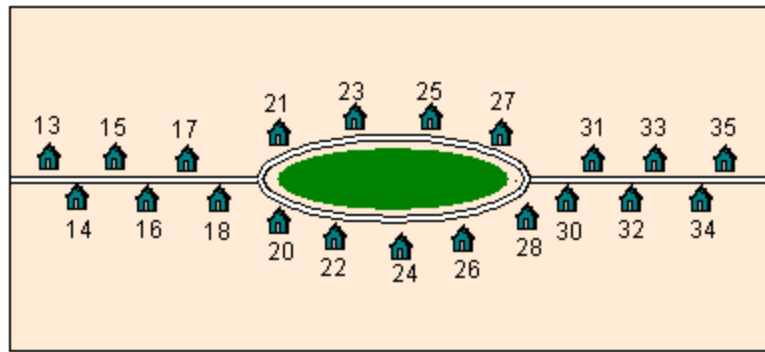
When possible, addressing should radiate out from the center of the municipality, with numbers increasing on a given street as one approaches the municipality's borders. To assist with street numbering, municipalities are encouraged to utilize the following suggestions:

- Main thoroughfares which cross a municipality should be numbered from one border to another.
- Whenever possible, addressing conflicts will be minimized on roads that continue from one municipality to another, including the continuation of addressing when necessary.

- Roads beginning in one municipality and terminating in another municipality should be named and addressed consistently. The two municipalities should agree upon a single name for the road, and addressing should continue from the municipality where the road originates to the municipality where the road terminates.



- Streets which form the border between municipalities, or which closely parallel the border should be numbered to prevent the assignment of conflicting or confusing addresses. The street should be addressed as a single entity with the direction of addressing consistent on both sides of the street, one side generating odd addresses, the other side generating even addresses.
- Cul-de-sacs should be numbered in a counter clockwise direction.
- Semicircular or loop streets should be addressed with numbers increasing in the same direction as numbers on the main street that the semicircular street intersects.
- Roads that split around a central median, park, or common area with traffic traveling in only one direction on either side of park should be numbered and addressed as a single unified road (example: parkway).



## Islands

Islands are considered to be land masses that are completely surrounded by water.

Each island should be individually addressed.

Addressing for islands can fall into 2 (two) categories: one access point or multiple access points.

- One access point – DESC recommends the main access point be assigned the address of #2.
- Multiple access points – DESC recommends the numbering begin at the northern most point of the island as #2 and continue with even numbers, counter clockwise, around the island using a 50' increment to determine the address. A 10' increment can be used for small congested islands.

## Driveways

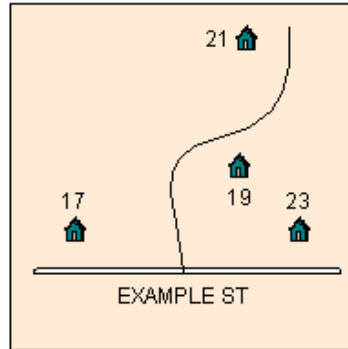
Driveways are intended solely to communicate the location of addressable structures. Driveways do not have their own address ranges. Structures accessed from driveways should obtain their addresses from the street with which the driveway intersects. If only one structure is accessed from a driveway, that structure should derive its address from the increment where the driveway intersects the street. For each additional structure accessed from a driveway an additional address on the main street will be consumed, either above or below the point of intersection. These addresses will no longer be available for assignment to structures with road frontage. This could result in addressing conflicts between structures accessed from the driveway and structures accessed directly from the road.

- When the address range of a road is unable to support the number of structures that are accessed from it due to the presence of driveways with multiple



addressable structures, the DESC recommends that the driveways be named and that the structures be addressed from the newly named road.

- Structures accessed from a driveway should be numbered with addresses increasing away from the intersecting street from which the addresses have been derived.

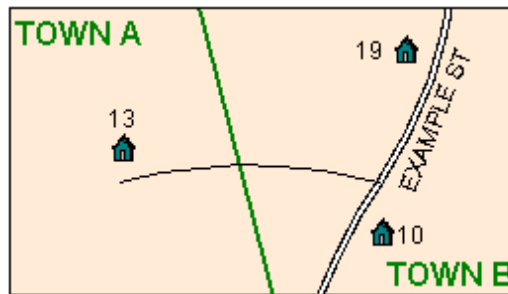


## Addressable Structures

Addressable structures are any buildings currently occupied, or which may in the future be occupied, to which emergency services may be dispatched.

- In most situations, the primary access is the point where the structure's driveway meets the road. In densely populated areas such as town and city centers, the primary access is the front door of the structure being addressed.
- Structures on corner lots that are visible from two intersecting roads but only accessible from one road should be addressed from the road it is accessed from.
  - Exception: Structures that can be accessed from the road in which they face should be addressed from the road they face regardless of the access point.
- Structures on corner lots that are visible from only one of the two intersecting roads, however accessible from both roads, should be addressed from the road where the structure is visible.
- Structures on corner lots that are not visible from either intersecting road but which can be accessed via driveway from both streets should be addressed from the road the structure is closer to.

- Structures accessed from semicircular driveways are addressed at the midpoint between the two driveway accesses, assuming that there are no buildings or buildable lots between the structure being addressed and the road.
- Structures should be addressed from the municipality where the building is located, even if the driveway access point falls in a neighboring municipality. In these cases, the structure will receive a street address consistent with the addressing system in use by the municipality where the access point is located.
  - Exception: If the road name used by the neighboring municipality is duplicate or similar sounding to any of the issuing municipality's road names, the driveway that provides access to the structure should become a named road and the structure should be addressed off the newly named driveway.



- Individual structures within campgrounds will be considered addressable if the structure is independent of the main office or building, or the structure is left at a site year round.
- Addresses should not contain either fractional numbers or letters. Addresses containing either of these should be reassigned a numeric address.
- Communities should refrain from assigning an address that is already in use even when there are multiple buildings on the same parcel.

## Multi-unit Structures

Structures containing multiple units within one discrete building, regardless of whether the building is residential, commercial, industrial, or governmental, should receive a single address, with each tenant within that structure receiving a subaddress. A subaddress is defined as “a unique location designation inside of a structure which has multiple tenants in one street address, for the purpose of identifying each tenant’s area within that structure.” Subaddresses should contain qualifiers to identify the type of unit within the structure, such as APT or STE. The subaddress qualifiers should conform to USPS standards for secondary units and the proper abbreviations.

Secondary Unit Designator	Approved Abbreviation
APARTMENT	APT
BASEMENT	BSMT *
BUILDING	BLDG
DEPARTMENT	DEPT
FLOOR	FL
FRONT	FRNT *
HANGAR	HNGR
LOBBY	LBBY *
LOT	LOT
LOWER	LOWR *
OFFICE	OFC *
PENTHOUSE	PH *
PIER	PIER
REAR	REAR *
ROOM	RM
SIDE	SIDE *
SLIP	SLIP
SPACE	SPC
STOP	STOP
SUITE	STE
TRAILER	TRLR
UNIT	UNIT
UPPER	UPPR *

\* Does not require secondary range number to follow

Subaddresses should increase away from the point of primary access. In small multi-unit structures including duplexes and townhouses, the subaddress should be alpha. In large multi-unit structures subaddresses should be numeric with the first number in the subaddress indicating the floor of the unit or at a minimum, some other type of floor designator. For example, in these buildings, units on the first floor would receive subaddresses between 101 and 199; units on the second floor would receive subaddress between 201 and 299.

- Exception: On a case by case basis row houses, strip malls, or downtown congested store fronts may be addressed at the front door of each adjoining unit, and each unit is treated as its own independent building rather than as a part of a multi-unit structure.
- Basement floors should receive a floor designator of B with a subaddress between 01 and 99.
  - Exception: Within multiple building complexes, each building which meets the definition of an addressable structure should receive its own individual address. The DESC recommends that multiple structures sharing a single address each be reassigned separate addresses
- Special case: Single discrete structures, which have tenants that can only be accessed from separate streets with no internal connecting hall, should be treated as though each access is a separate structure receiving its own unique address.
- Hotels/motels with cottages or cabins or other multi-building complexes, should receive a single address when there is a central building or office, upon which all other structures are dependent. All dependent detached structures should be issued a subaddress.

## Landmarks

The following features should not automatically receive an address. They primarily serve to provide a greater context for emergency responders traveling to the scene of an incident.

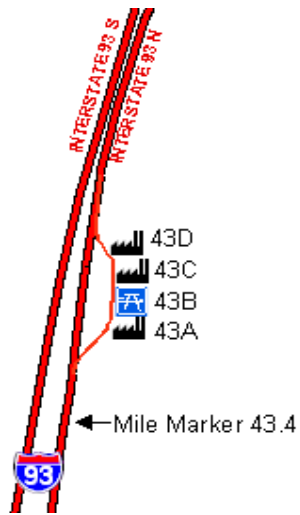
<b>Features Not Requiring Addresses</b>
Boat Launch
Boundary
Bridge
Cemetery
Dam
Entrance
Gate
Helipad
Hydrant
Outbuilding
Recreation Area
Rest Area
Tower
Trail head
Windmill

## Interstate and Freeway Addressing

Interstates and Freeways, defined as roads that do not have “at-grade interactions”, are generally exempt from other addressing standards discussed in this guide.

Interstates and Freeways can only be accessed through interchanges, utilizing on-ramps and off-ramps. They cannot be accessed from adjacent properties or cross roads, and under most circumstances have no stoplights or stop signs.

- If an address for a structure is needed, one should be derived from the mile marker at the access point or the start of the off ramp to which the structure is located.
- If there are multiple structures at a location, each structure should share the same address and receive a unique address suffix. The suffix should start with the letter “A” and increment with each additional structure.
- The street name for the address should be the name of the highway followed by the direction.



- The additional location field in the ALI (Automatic Location Identification) record will hold the exact mile marker /tenth closest to the off-ramp.

Examples of structures needing an address would include rest areas or visitor information centers.

*A rest area structure located on I-93 North with an off ramp starting at mile marker 43.4 will have an address of: 43 Interstate 93 N.*

*If there are multiple structures at this location, they would be addressed as 43A, 43B, 43C, etc...*

**In the example, all four structures would have an Additional Location Field entry of: Mile Marker 43.4**