

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

Addendum to Recommended Practice 2007-4

Subject: Procedures for Designation of Doors Numbers

Purpose: Emergency Services in Montgomery County have agreed that buildings side location should be standardized as described below. Many jurisdictions also have a program that encourages the labeling of exterior doors in the same standard fashion. This allows firefighters and other emergency responders to be aware of what side of a building they are on and approximately where on that side they are located. The side/door designation can also be utilized when giving reports and instructions, i.e. "Engine 20, best access to the fire is through Alpha 2".

Method: One side of the building is always designated as Side A. Side A is usually the street side or the front of the building. Moving in a clockwise direction around the building the next side is side B, the next side, opposite of side A is side C and finally, side D.

All directions and orders given at the scene will be referenced to the sides of the building and/or the floor level, i.e. "Chief 20 on location. Side A is the Broad Street side. Ladder 20, force entry on the C and advise on conditions".

Often, the side designations, especially at large or complex structures, are determined ahead of time on Fire Dept Pre-Plans. Working with the building owner to mark the sides and door numbers prior to any emergency will help first responders be more effective and operate more safely. If the doors are to be marked, the following procedures are recommended:

- Facing side A, start with the door farthest on the right, and label that A1. Proceed in a clockwise direction and the next door would be A2, etc. This is repeated on each side of the building.
- Doors should be marked both on the inside and outside
- Letters and numbers should be large enough to be easily visible and in a color that is contrasting to the door color
- Do NOT mark overhead doors, only man doors
- Lobby doors leading directly to the exterior exit access should also be labeled
- Exterior doors that open into a completely segregated room should not be marked, i.e. door leading to fire pump room". That exception should be noted on pre-plan.
- Any site and evacuation plans should include reference to the doors by side and number.
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It is recommended that if you are considering using this marking system, the local fire department should be consulted.