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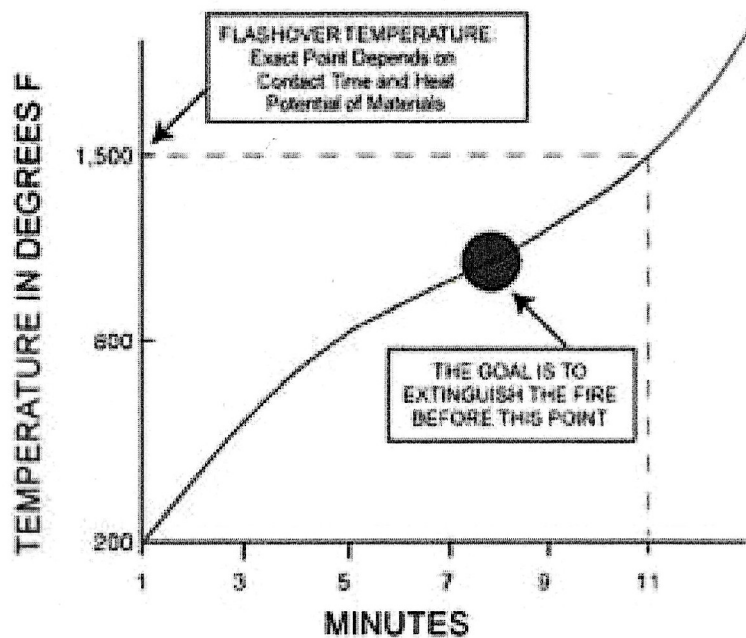
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CITY OF PLACERVILLE
Administration Department
3101 Center Street
Placerville, CA 95667

REGARDING: 12.1 Assessment of Fire Gates in Placerville and Challenges Associated with their Removal

Response Time to Fires – It is generally recognized that a fire's growth is exponential. The more time passes, the more a fire grows in intensity. Emergency Services Consulting International describes it this way: Combustible material adjacent to the flame heat and ignites, which in turn heats and ignites other adjacent materials if sufficient oxygen is present. As the objects burn, heated gases accumulate at the ceiling of the room. Some of the gases are flammable and highly toxic. The spread of the fire from this point continues quickly. Soon the flammable gases at the ceiling, as well as other combustible material in the room of origin, reach ignition temperature. At that point, an event termed "flashover" occurs; the gases and other material ignite, which in turn ignites everything in the room. Once flashover occurs, damage caused by the fire is significant and the environment within the room can no longer support human life. Flashover usually occurs about five to eight minutes from the appearance of flame in typically furnished and ventilated buildings. Since flashover has such a dramatic influence on the outcome of a fire event, the goal of any fire agency is to apply water to a fire before flashover occurs. Everything related to fire has to be considered as growing on an upwardly sloped curve that can quickly turn into an exponential curve. Not only does fire grow at that rate, the negative effects of fire also grow in that manner. As a result, response time is critical, as all efforts are made to put out the fire prior to the flashover point or prior to it spilling beyond the initial source of the fire. The following charts illustrate why response times must be kept to a minimum in order to save lives and property

Generalized Flashover Curve



Source: Fire Life Safety Consulting

I SUPPORT OPTION 1

Prioritize the review and potential removal of fire gates on public streets where feasible, in coordination with the Fire Chief and Public Works; 2) Engage with property owners and homeowners' associations for gates on private streets to explore removal or modifications (e.g., keeping gates unlocked during high fire danger periods); and 3) Conduct a comprehensive CEQA analysis for any proposed removals that could impact circulation or existing project approvals. This approach balances improved emergency access with legal, environmental, and operational considerations.

Thanks for taking the time to deal with this critical safety issue.

Mickey Kaiserman