

# Home fire sprinkler trade-ups: good for developers, homeowners, and communities

*Trade-ups can increase fire safety, control municipal operating expenses, and lower construction costs. The best time to take advantage of the trade-up concept for subdivision development savings is prior to submitting subdivision plans. When proper subdivision and development options are provided, development costs can be reduced. Sprinklered developments provide an excellent opportunity to provide increased fire safety.*

*The cost of developing raw land into an approved building site can be significantly reduced through trade-ups. These options are only applicable if all the buildings in the development will have built-in automatic fire protection.*

*Including fire sprinklers in all new construction is a win-win decision. The community has additional fire protection without higher taxes or increased insurance rates. The developer can reduce land development costs, while the builder can reduce construction costs. And the buyer benefits from increased life and property protection at a lower cost.*

## Trade-up options

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- **Street width reduction:** Traffic lanes may be narrowed, substantially reducing the amount of pavement in every linear foot of street in the development.
- **Longer dead-end streets:** Dead-end streets may be increased in length, allowing additional building lots to be accessed.
- **Tee turnarounds permitted:** The permitted use of tee turnarounds in sprinklered developments can create at least one additional lot per cul-de-sac.
- **Increased street grades and building setbacks:** Steeper street grades and building locations further from paved access for fire vehicles may be permitted.
- **Additional units permitted:** Although the actual percentage may vary, increases up to 20 percent are not uncommon.
- **Expansion of existing water supply may not be needed:** Required fire flows for fully sprinklered developments can be greatly reduced compared to non-sprinklered developments.

- **Increased hydrant spacing:** Supply mains may be reduced and hydrant spacing can be increased.

Over time, communities with fully sprinklered developments should see a decrease in fire death rates and property loss.

Another option to explore is building code alternatives, which might include a reduction in fire-rated partitioning requirements between the living spaces of the home and other spaces, such as an attached garage. Fire sprinkler trade-ups and code alternatives can substantially offset the cost of fire sprinkler installation.

## Incentives

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Communities across the country are offering incentives for homes protected with fire sprinklers:

- New Jersey has a law that eliminates the standby fees for stand-alone fire service water lines of two inches or less.
- Altamonte Springs, FL, allows a 40% credit against the water connection charge for residences with sprinklers.
- Scottsdale, AZ, and other communities allow reduced fire hydrant spacing requirements.

The bottom line is that home fire sprinklers are good for residents, the fire service, and communities. In addition to their life-safety and property-protection benefits, fire sprinklers reduce local infrastructure costs and provide environmental benefits.

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## Building a safer Habitat home



**Two Habitat for Humanity homes being built in Hanover, MA, are being outfitted with home fire sprinklers. Watch a short video that illustrates that sprinkler installations can be done easily and do not delay construction.**

[www.nfpa.org/habitat](http://www.nfpa.org/habitat)

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