

Knox Box Rapid Entry System For Commercial Properties

The Birmingham Fire Department has adopted the Knox Box Rapid Entry System to reduce unnecessary damage caused when forcing entry into a building when a key is not readily available, i.e. in the middle of the night. The primary component of the rapid entry system is the Knox Box. Knox Boxes are small vaults and cabinets made to hold building entrance keys, electronic access cards and vital emergency information. The property owner purchases a **Knox-Box** device and mounts it near the main building entrance or property gate (contact fire department for best placement). Every Knox Box sold for use by Firefighters to an address in the City of Birmingham is keyed alike, with a high security key cylinder, which is installed by Knox at the time of manufacture. This allows the fire department to carry one key that provides access to all the Knox Boxes within the city. Knox padlocks and key switches are also available through the Knox Company to provide fire department access to property gates, emergency shutoffs, fences, etc. through use of that one key. Having a key for access not only prevents property damage when we gain entry but probably, just as important, it allows us to secure the building when we leave.

Participation in the program is simple and available to all business owners in the City of Birmingham. To participate follow these 5 steps:

1. Log on to the Knox Box website at www.knoxbox.com and purchase a Knox Box
2. Talk to the Fire Prevention Division at 248-530-1900 about proper installation
3. Install the Knox Box as directed by Fire Prevention
4. Make copies of the necessary keys to your building
5. Call Fire Prevention for an appointment to insert the keys in the box and lock the door to secure the keys.

Since the adoption of the new Fire Code in 2012 the Fire Prevention Bureau has been requiring the installation of a Knox Box during new construction and remodeling. Otherwise, it is not mandated that existing buildings be fitted with a Knox Box unless, due to hazards or other circumstances, it is required by the Fire Marshal or requested by the property owner. Eventually it is the Fire Departments plan to have all the commercial buildings in the City of Birmingham equipped with a Knox Box. If you have questions please contact our Fire Prevention Bureau at 248-530-1900 or visit **Knox-Box** at www.knoxbox.com for additional information.

Sincerely,
Lyal Bigger
Fire Marshal
City of Birmingham