



OKLAHOMA CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal's Office

Interpretation

Interpretation #: OKCAHJ-2018-06	Subject of Interpretation: Installation of Knox Box Devices	
Code Reference: 2009 IFC Section 506.1 and 912.3.1		
Reviewed By: Robert Crisp	Title: Assistant Fire Marshal	Effective Date: 5/14/2018
Approved By: Harold Thompson	Title: Fire Marshal	Revision Date: N/A

Purpose:

The Oklahoma City Fire Department (OCFD) has determined that the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of Oklahoma City are promoted and safeguarded by requiring certain structures to have a Knox Box installed on the exterior of the structure to aid the OCFD to gain access to the structure when unoccupied or when the occupants are unable to grant ingress to the Fire Department. The Knox Box system will reduce the need for forced entry into structures and should avoid costly and time-consuming efforts in gaining access to locked structures during an emergency.

The fire department has an obligation to investigate calls and to respond to emergencies at commercial and residential structures; therefore, the Knox Box system will allow the fire department the ability to achieve maximum efficiency when responding to alarms. The potential for firefighter injury during forcible entry is dramatically reduced as well (no forced entry required). The system can also provide a secure location for storing critical hazardous material and other pertinent information to responding emergency personnel.

Description of Code Reference:

506.1 Where required. Where access to or within a structure or an area is restricted because of secured openings or where immediate access is necessary for life-saving or fire-fighting purposes, the *fire code official* is authorized to require a key box to be installed in an *approved* location. The key box shall be of an *approved* type and shall contain keys to gain necessary access as required by the *fire code official*.

506.1.1 Locks. An *approved lock* shall be installed on gates or similar barriers when required by the *fire code official*.

506.2 Key box maintenance. The operator of the building shall immediately notify the *fire code official* and provide the new key when a lock is changed or rekeyed. The key to such lock shall be secured in the key box.

912.3.1 Locking fire department connection caps. The *fire code official* is authorized to require locking caps on fire department connections for water-based *fire protection systems* where the responding fire department carries appropriate key wrenches for removal.

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Policy based on the Interpretation of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ):

All Knox boxes should be installed on the address side of the building or the main business door of the facility, and mounted between five and six feet from the ground. In the event that the Knox box cannot be installed at the recommended location and/or height, the Code Inspector may designate a different location and installation specification. A window decal that is included when the Knox Box is shipped shall be placed on the exterior access door to alert OCFD that a Knox Box is provided.

The following structures or properties located within the City of Oklahoma City shall be equipped with a key box at an accessible location near the main entrance of the structure or property or at such other location approved by the Code Inspector:

1. All buildings which have fire sprinkler and/or alarm systems
2. All multi-family residential dwellings that have restricted access through locked doors and have common corridors for access to the living units or mechanical rooms
3. Any building where the Code Inspector determines that lack of access may result in loss of life or extensive property or environmental damage, based on factors including, but not limited to fire load, occupant load, exposures, building construction, age of building, and storage or use of hazardous materials
4. All properties having security gates, fences or devices which limit access to the building or property shall be provided with a Knox padlock, hardware, or Knox Box as approved by the Code Inspector. New electronic gates shall have integrated Knox hardware.

The contents of the Knox Box shall contain, but not be limited to the following items as designated by the Code Inspector:

1. Keys to locked points of ingress into the building
2. Keys to all mechanical and electrical rooms
3. Keys to elevators and elevator control rooms
4. Keys to fire sprinkler and alarm rooms
5. Keys to re-set manual pull stations or other fire protection devices
6. Keys to any other areas as requested by the Code Inspector
7. A business card containing the emergency contact people and phone numbers for the building

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Building and property owners will be required:

1. To purchase and install an approved Knox box or padlock
2. To provide the proper keys to the OCFD for the required access
3. To notify the OCFD when the locks or keys have been changed
4. To keep the immediate area of the Knox box free and clear of any and all obstructions

When a building is protected by an automatic sprinkler or standpipe system and supplied by a fire department connection (FDC), a locking Knox cap shall be installed for the protection of the FDC.

Exception: systems supplied by a FDC of 1 ½ inch in size or smaller.

This policy shall not apply to owners of one- and two-family dwellings, but are encouraged to participate voluntarily in utilizing a Residential Knox Box for emergency medical situations.