



San Rafael

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT – FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901 TEL. (415) 485-3308 FAX (415) 485-3184

Subject: Fire Prevention Bureau Standard – KEY BOX / KEY SWITCH INSTALLATION

This Standard is promulgated pursuant to provisions in the California Fire Code as adopted by the San Rafael City Council.

I. General

The California Fire Code stipulates “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 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”. After investigation of the available products, it has been determined that the product line offered by the Knox Company, of Phoenix, AZ, satisfies the security needs of the Fire Department and the community.

II. Ordering Procedures

- A. Fill out an order form available from the Fire Prevention Bureau located in City Hall.
- B. Knox boxes are available in different sizes and in different installation configurations (recessed/surface mount, with/without tamper switches). The minimum acceptable box is the model 3200 for small businesses or applications with 10 or fewer keys. The 4400 single lock Knox Box should be used for large numbers of keys in excess of 10 keys. (Consult the Knox Box website at <http://www.knoxbox.com> for descriptions of the box.)
- C. For new construction, recessed mounted boxes (not surface mounted boxes) must be used. For new box installations on existing buildings, *recessed* boxes are preferred but surface-mounted boxes will be permitted.
- D. Complete the front side of the authorization form including the following items to the San Rafael Fire Prevention Bureau at 1400 Fifth Avenue:
 - 1. Ordered by
 - 2. Parts ordered
 - 3. Installation address and ship to address or check box if same
 - 4. Computation of all costs.
 - Note:** For vendors installing a box, not on their own premises, a California resale number may be substituted for the sales tax.
 - 5. Include a check payable to the “Knox Company” for the total amount or pre-payment credit card information (Section 3).
 - 6. If paying by check include a stamped envelope addressed to:

The Knox Company
1601 W. Deer Valley Road
Phoenix, AZ 85027

- F. The Fire Prevention Bureau will then perform the following:
1. Verify the completeness of the form and make a photocopy for the file
 2. Forward the form and check to the Knox Company.

II. Installation Procedures

- A. The box, which will be sent to the applicant, comes with the door off, and in the locked position. The installer of the box shall install the unit per manufacturers instructions & the following additional requirements:
1. Locate the Knox box in an obvious location, preferably near the main entrance to the building or, as an alternative, near the fire alarm panel room (if there is one).
 2. Mounting height shall be 72" – 78" above the adjacent walking area.
 3. Area shall be free of shrubbery or other vegetation that may interfere with the fire fighters ability to access the Knox box.
 4. Use heavy "lag bolts or other sturdy means to secure the box to the wall.
Note: Always mount your KNOX-BOX to a secure, solid wall, beam or post.
 5. If a box with a tamper switch ordered, the switch should be connected with, and tested by, your burglar alarm company prior to "lock up". The wiring will not be accessible once the face is secured.
- C. If you have any questions concerning the installation of the Knox box contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (415) 485-3308.
- D. The following keys shall be assembled and have a durable ID tag affixed to them with the door, room, or suite number clearly visible:
1. One for the main entry.
 2. One each for the Electrical room, Fire Alarm Panel Room, and Sprinkler Riser Room.
 3. One for fire alarm or sprinkler system padlocks.
 4. One for each elevator car for Fire Department override (where applicable).
 5. For very large buildings: One grand master key for each floor, each wing, i.e., five story building with two wings = 10 grand masters.

III. Final Steps

- A. Call the Fire Prevention Bureau line at (415) 485 – 3308 to arrange for a "lock up". Please have available the address of the job site where the box or key switch is installed, your permit number (if one was issued for the job) and suggested times you will be able to meet an inspector on site.
- B. The Fire Inspector will contact you later to set up an inspection time.
- C. The Fire Inspector will come out and verify the workability and labeling of the keys then lock the keys into the Knox box.
- D. The location of the box will then be conveyed to the Fire Dispatch Center for future reference.
Note: If suite numbers or letters change at any time or keys change due to tenant changes, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau to assist with the replacement keys.

The box or key switch will **not** be used for fire prevention inspection purposes (other than yearly verification of the workability of the keys) or police matters, or if the building owner or tenant has locked themselves out.

Thomas Ahrens, Chief Building Official/ Fire Marshal