



# RAPID ACCESS



RAPID ACCESS NEWSLETTER

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Devon Energy Tower, Oklahoma City, OK



OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

## Unique FDC Program

Oklahoma City Fire Department first implemented the Knox System in 2000 after they adopted the 2000 International Fire Code (IFC). The code allows the department to require rapid entry lock boxes and they chose Knox as their rapid entry system. Their adoption of the Knox System coincided with the increase in gated communities within their jurisdiction. "We started having a lot of gated communities – many had a padlock that we would cut when we needed access but too much was left up for us to be liable. We wanted to reduce our liability and put it back on the occupant to help limit any loss of property. It's a lot easier to open the gate with Knox," explained Assistant Fire Marshal Harold Thompson.

While buildings with existing Siamese connections were not required to be changed over to a storz connection, there was one change that did affect these buildings. "If an existing structure's Siamese connections are found open we recommend they upgrade to a storz connection or they need to add the Knox Locking FDC Plugs. They cannot be replaced with the plastic (break away) caps," shared Thompson.



Oklahoma City Fire Inspector with construction project leaders

In 2010, the Oklahoma City Fire Department began requiring storz connections on new buildings or building remodels rather than the traditional Siamese connections. They implemented the Knox FDC Protection Program when they started requiring all storz connections have a locking 4" StorzGuard cap installed. "Any time a new building goes in it has to have a 4" storz connection locking cap," explained Thompson. This change didn't impact existing buildings with Siamese connections.

Once the decision was made to require storz connections on all new construction, the next line of business was communicating this change to the building and sprinkler community. The state of Oklahoma maintains a database of all sprinkler contractors licensed within the state. Additionally Oklahoma City keeps a database of those they work with directly within city limits. The fire department sent out an email to these two databases outlining the change. Then they

Continued on back cover

# EDITORIAL

*In this issue we at the Knox Company want to take a moment for a tribute to the Granite Mountain Hotshots. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those families who have been directly impacted by this tragedy.*

*Knox headquarters are located in north Phoenix and Prescott is our neighbor to the north. Over the past few weeks we've seen and smelt the smoke from the Yarnell Hill Fire every time we'd go outside. It's been a constant reminder of Prescott's devastating loss. There are no words to adequately express our feelings. We are only able to offer our deepest sympathy and support for all firefighters, especially those who have given the ultimate sacrifice.*

*The Knox Company*



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*For if this day on the line...  
I should answer death's call...  
Lord, bless my Hot Shot Crew...  
My family, one and all.*

**Andrew Sterling Ashcraft**

**Robert E. Caldwell**

**Travis Clay Carter**

**Dustin James DeFord**

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**William Howard "Billy" Warneke**

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**Garret Zuppiger**

**Give to the  
Survivor's  
Fund  
[100Club.org](http://100Club.org)**



# Knox helps extend service for Volunteer Department



The community of Elmont New York is served by an all-volunteer department – The Elmont Volunteer Fire Dept. A volunteer department faces some unique challenges that most career departments do not. All the members have other jobs that they leave when called to a fire. Having to wait for key holders not only keeps members from the next fire but from their regular jobs. Elmont implemented the Knox System to help minimize wait times while also providing their community better service.

Elmont adopted the Knox System in 2002. They stressed the importance of the box in preventing unnecessary damage to properties. Additionally, as a volunteer department, it minimizes the time crews have to be on calls – there's no waiting for a key holder to let them inside. Assistant Fire Inspector Joseph Gerrato says, "We explain the importance of the Knox-Box and preventing unnecessary damage. Having someone come and repair the damage after hours is expensive. And being a volunteer department, we don't have to wait a long time to lock the building." Gerrato elaborated, "After hour repairs to a door or window can easily run \$200-\$400. After we explain the risks versus the benefit of the box they see the box is cheaper than repairs."

Working with the local Elementary school district's safety committee, they recently had a Knox-Box installed on all 5 elementary schools and 2 administration offices. This came about after a round table discussion between the school administrators, the local police and committee members. They discussed evacuation, fire lane violations and lock down drills as well as afterhours access. At the time the department was carrying a key ring. Each key opened one door at each school. Every time a lock cylinder was changed, the key

ring was outdated. Rather than continue carrying the ring of keys for the schools, the department decided to standardize to the Knox System to make emergency access easier.

Elmont has KeySecure Key Retention Units installed in all their apparatus. The units have the blue strobe. This keeps the department's master keys under control and helps the department maintain the integrity of their Knox System. When access to a box is needed, an authorized member enters their unique PIN code into the unit to retrieve the key. Once finished, they return the key to the unit. The KeySecure unit maintains an audit trail showing who gained access to the key and when. Elmont selected the strobe light version of KeySecure to help remind members to return the key to the unit. "Now the master key is locked and secure," Gerrato said.

Elmont recently expanded their Knox System to include the Knox MedVault Narcotics Drug Locker on their 2 ambulances. With a large number of volunteer EMS personnel this is very helpful. With the electronic keyless entry system, access made to any of the




controlled drugs is automatically recorded by the MedVault by the PIN number used to access the vault itself. "This helps keep inventory in check," shared Gerrato. "The Department doesn't have to worry about meds disappearing."



*Knox KeySecure® key retention unit mounted in apparatus.*

Elmont offers its business owners and residents the ability to order Knox Product online. (For online orders, the department's Knox Coordinator receives an email for each order placed within their jurisdiction with the order details – who and what was purchased. If your department is interested in adopting online ordering for property owners in your jurisdiction, please contact your regional account manager or simply e-mail us at [support@knoxbox.com](mailto:support@knoxbox.com) and request an "Order Options Packet".)

To assist in training their members, Elmont installed a box and the locking plugs on the department's training tower. "They have to use the Knox-Box to get into the training tower," Gerrato shared. Three of the district fire houses now have the boxes and locking plugs.

The Elmont Fire Department located on Long Island in Nassau County serves a population of over 47,000 in a 5.73 square mile area. The department operates 8 companies from 7 firehouses located throughout the district with a membership of 235. The community is best known as the home of the third leg of the Triple Crown – Belmont Stakes. Belmont Park is within the department's jurisdiction. 



# Ordinances: Why Bother?



Measuring the exit where hundreds were killed and burned. Image from: *Chicago's Awful Theater Horror*, 1904



**December 30th 1903,** a Wednesday just a little after 3:00 on a blustery winter afternoon in the Windy City. It's the dawn of a new century, the country is healing from the wounds of the Civil War and the economy is growing. It's was a good time to be an American. Teddy Roosevelt was the President. Less than two weeks earlier the Wright Brothers

had made their historic first flight at Kitty Hawk, and just a few weeks before that, baseball fans saw Cy Young and the Boston Americans win the first World Series. Henry Ford formed the Ford Motor Company. Speeding was in vogue. Cars could do 20 mph.

Back in Chicago, it's the beginning of the second act of the musical "*Mr. Bluebeard*" with a standing room only matinee audience of 2,000. A dance number was in progress when a stage light high up in the scaffolding shorted out and sparks rained down and ignited a curtain. The emergency asbestos drop curtain got hung up in the elaborate stage equipment and didn't fully deploy. Stagehands, attempting to provide a means of escape, opened a huge stage door on the buildings north side. This allowed a giant rush of cold winter air into the structure that let loose what was later described as a 'cyclonic fireball'. The resulting fire was devastating. What was a joyous holiday festive event of mothers and children, in an instant, had turned into an unthinkable living hell of destruction and carnage. Eddie Foy, a famous vaudeville actor of the day and the inspiration for the 1950s Bob Hope movie, *The Seven Little Foys*, was on stage and became a hero for risking his life by staying on stage and trying to calm the panicked crowd. First responding firefighters, seeing little smoke, thought it was a false alarm. The reality is by the time they arrived the interior of the theater had been consumed. They found bodies stacked ten high blocking entryways and any hope of escape. Over 575 people died in a matter of just minutes; dozens more in the days that followed.

As we commemorate the 110th anniversary of the *Iroquois Theater Fire* in Chicago, it still has the distinction of being the deadliest theater fire and deadliest single-building fire in US history. What makes it worse is that fire inspectors had noted to the managers of the theater right before the official opening that there were no extinguishers, sprinklers,

alarms, telephones, or water connections. They didn't have the authority to stop the opening and their warnings were ignored by the theater operators and the city bosses.

*What if the fire official's warnings had been taken seriously and a strict life safety ordinance been adopted?*

What if the fire official's warnings had been taken seriously and a strict life safety ordinance been adopted? That's what happened after the fire. In fact, one resulting fire safety feature has probably saved more lives than were lost in that fire. What is it?



Panic Hardware, brain child of Carl Prinzler who narrowly escaped being in the theater and lost in the fire. The next time you hit the crash bar handle as you casually exit a building; take a second to think about the unbelievable panic, fear and desperation that gripped those 602 people on that cold December afternoon. Could this event have been avoided? Yes. The fire inspectors, who at one point were accused of taking bribes to overlook fire hazards, had reported the deficiencies. They were later exonerated, but by then the damage to their careers was done. Are local ordinances important



today? Who passes them? How are they enforced?

*Are local ordinances important today?  
Who passes them?  
How are they enforced?*

History is full of examples of communities that have taken major steps to enhance the level of survivability of occupants in a fire scenario by passing ordinances and requiring substantial changes to existing structures and occupancies. Unfortunately, it seems like most come as a result of catastrophic high-fatality fires that prompted a public outcry, litigation and lost careers. That is exactly what happened in Chicago in the aftermath of the Iroquois Theater Fire. They went so far as to indict the mayor. Sweeping changes were implemented all across the country and thousands of occupancies from schools and warehouses to places of assembly were retrofit



with functional panic doors and marked exits. Some code officials will say that they do not have the authority to require these changes to older, existing structures. History does not support this position. All local officials are just one incident away from public scrutiny, litigation, and mandatory change. Historical events, coupled with the trend toward aggressive action by forward-thinking code officials and fire

marshals, has lead to the concept of passing local ordinances with a retrofit component that addresses issues relating to public safety to lessen the loss of life and property damage. This is true of key boxes and the need to protect fire sprinkler and standpipe connections. It is important that fire officials proactively recognize changing trends and work to make buildings safer and more survivable.



### Ordinance vs. Policy Statement


Because the ordinance development process is perceived to be time consuming, complex, and a political mine field, some fire officials will attempt to make changes by instituting a Policy Statement. For example, they will determine that fire lanes need to be expanded, or fire extinguisher service intervals need to be adjusted. While this may be acceptable in the short run, or when there are unique circumstances, like a temporary burn ban, it is questionable if it is even within the power of the executive branch (fire marshal) to both set standards and enforce them as law without legislative review and consent. That is where an ordinance becomes a powerful tool. As the word implies, the ordinance is 'ordained' by the community as a whole and has the full weight and enforcement authority of any other law. It promotes consistency and uniformity in prevention and code enforcement. A local policy statement may be challenged and brought before an appeals board or the courts if a citation is issued for noncompliance. It may be

possible for the policy to be challenged as being the 'opinion' of the fire official and not necessarily a recognized standard. If that same policy had been adopted into the city's Code of Ordinances the requirements are recognized as being the 'will of the people' and are more easily enforced and defended in court.

As communities grow and emerging needs arise, new standards best practices will emerge to meet the demand. Understanding how the legislative system works, and the keys to success, will be important in implementing them into the community.

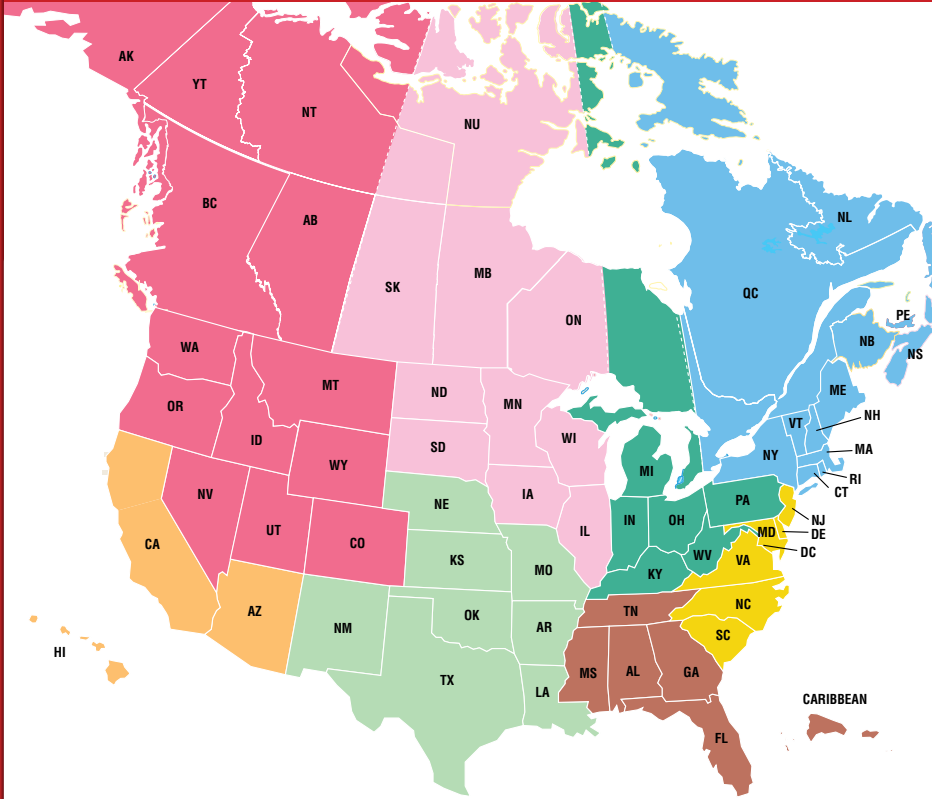
The power of the legislature is available to every community. While it can be daunting, it is the most effective way to make lasting, sustainable improvements to your community. Think about it the next time you hit the crash bar on a building exit door and stroll out to your car. Adopting a local ordinance that addresses the public safety concerns

*The power of the legislature is available to every community. While it can be daunting, it is the most effective way to make lasting, sustainable improvements to your community.*

in your community will demonstrate consistency and will make it easy for those affected to comply. The power is available to you, use it. 



# Knox Contacts



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## SUPPORT CONTACTS

### FIRE DEPARTMENT SUPPORT

This department provides customer service to fire departments.

**800-KNOX-BOX  
(800-566-9269)**

### ELECTRONIC SUPPORT

This department deals exclusively with technical questions regarding KeySecure®, Sentralok® and MedVault® units.

**866-KNOX-BOX  
(866-566-9269)**

### PROPERTY OWNER SUPPORT

Property Owners & General Inquiries to Knox should be directed to our main number.

**800-552-KNOX  
(800-552-5669)**

# KNOX NEWS

## Trade Show Schedule

Show & Location	Dates
South Atlantic Fire Expo, Raleigh, NC	August 8-10
FireRescue International, Chicago, IL	August 13-17
EMS World Expo, Las Vegas, NV	September 11-12
NJ FF Show, Wildwood, NJ	September 13-14
Fire-Rescue Canada, Regina, SK	September 22-25
Alaska Fire Chiefs, Anchorage, AK	September 23-28
SC EMS Leadership, Charleston, SC	September 26-28
Northwest Fire & Rescue, Portland, OR	September 27-28
Oregon EMS Conference, Bend, OR	October 5-6
MT Fire Chiefs, Missoula, MT	October 10-12
IAEMSC, Washington, DC	October 12-14
Illinois Fire Chiefs, Peoria, IL	October 14-15
Illinois Fire Inspectors, Addison, IL	October 21-22
FireShowReno, Reno, NV	October 22-24
Vital Signs, Buffalo, NY	October 24-27
TN Fire Marshals, Murfreesboro, TN	October 28-31
WI Fire Inspectors, Green Bay, WI	October 28- November 1



## **FYI: Windows XP Support ends January 1, 2014**

Effective January 1, 2014 the Knox Company will no longer provide support or updates for Knox applications for departments using Windows XP. This change is a direct result of Microsoft no longer offering support for Windows XP. While we don't believe this support change will negatively impact most users, we can no longer provide support if your Windows XP system fails to execute properly. Therefore, we strongly recommend you update your Windows XP systems to minimize any potential problems with our application software, particularly if you utilize any of the advance features such as WiFi.

**IMPORTANT:** Prior to performing ANY software or firmware updates, be sure to conduct an audit trail download from the unit, as audit trail records may be overwritten during the upgrade.




## **NEW and “e-improved”**

**Go Paperless!**



Knox has developed a NEW ordering option for departments called “eApproval.” This new eApproval method allows a property owner to place a “pre-authorization” request on our website, and Knox holds the request until approved by the authorizing department. Once approved, the purchaser receives a cart link via email and can then proceed with their department-authorized online order. Departments also have denial authority with the ability to send further instructions or a message to the purchaser along with a denial.

For those departments wanting to try a paperless approval method while still maintaining a per-order authorization process, eApproval may be for you.

Special thanks to the three departments that beta-tested this new ordering method: Billings Fire Department, Montana; Fort Lauderdale Fire-Rescue, Florida and Cedar Park Fire Department, Texas. 

*“Knox eApproval not only provides the department with control over where the boxes are installed in the city, it also provides better customer service and ensures that the boxes are being shipped to the proper jurisdiction.”*

- Captain Ray Cicero, CFI, CFEI – Ft. Lauderdale Fire-Rescue

**To change ordering options, download the form: [knoxbox.com/options.htm](http://knoxbox.com/options.htm)  
For questions or an orientation, please contact Cynthia Weiss [cweiss@knoxbox.com](mailto:cweiss@knoxbox.com)**

## **The Key to a Secure System**

Knox System security is always important. Protecting the Knox® Master Key and documents listing installation addresses helps ensure that the Knox System is solely for the benefit of your department.

The four security steps listed below are the ways your department contributes to the security of the Knox program in your community. Thank you for following these simple yet important rules.

- 1. Keep all Knox keys in a secure place.**
- 2. Do not release the Knox provided keys to any non fire department or law enforcement personnel.**
- 3. Do not provide Knox installation database access to any non fire department or law enforcement personnel unless required by law.**
- 4. Notify Knox immediately of loss, theft or attempted duplication of any key.**

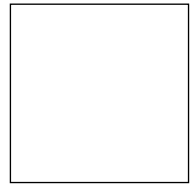


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## Unique FDC Program *Continued*

contacted the local sprinkler association so they could forward information on this requirement to their members. The final step was to make sure the storz connections were on all new plans. "When we review their plans, we make sure the storz connections are on the plans. If not, we remind them that they must be included," explained Thompson.

The implementation of the locking caps and plugs has been well received by the community. "We explained the value of having the locking caps versus having to back flush the system and replace missing caps," Thompson explained. "We do a good job of explaining the value."

As for training the department members, "It's really self-explanatory," said Thompson. They informed all members about the locking plugs and explained their purpose before distributing the key wrenches to the individual apparatus. The key wrench is now a regular part of the apparatus tools and equipment list.

The fire department provided each sprinkler company with one key wrench since it is easier for the contractors to

*"We explained the value of having the locking caps versus having to back flush the system and replace missing caps,"*

install the caps and plugs. Also it's much easier for them to perform a system's yearly inspection without having to have the fire department come out. "It cuts down on our having to go there on every occasion when they need the connection opened or closed," explained Thompson. "It's easier for them to put the caps on and to have access to perform the yearly inspections."

The Oklahoma City Fire Department directs property owners to the Knox website to make their purchases. (Forms are still available for those who don't want to order online.) The

## OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

department likes the convenience of having business owners and residents purchase products online. (For online orders, the department's Knox Coordinator receives an email for each order placed within their jurisdiction with the order details – who and what was purchased. If your department is interested in adopting online ordering for property owners in your jurisdiction, please contact your regional account manager or simply e-mail us at [support@knoxbox.com](mailto:support@knoxbox.com) and request an "Order Options Packet".)

Oklahoma City Fire Department serves a population of 1.5 million covering 621 square miles. Currently they have 36 stations and are building two new stations to bring the total number of stations to 38. The new stations will serve areas of the community that have seen a lot of growth in recent years. 