MERRY CHRISTMAS

To Knox Program Coordinators,

During this holiday season,
we want to take the opportunity to
thank you for believing in the value
of the Knox Rapid Entry System and for
your contribution to the Knox program
in your community. We wish you the
very best for the New Year.
Merry Christmas!

Sincerely, The Knox Team

In This Issue:

A Reliable System

ASHEVILLE, NC

The Asheville Fire Department has been using the Knox System since 1991. They started the program because rapid access during an emergency was an issue. "Getting people to respond and let us in was an issue," shared Wayne Hamilton. The department found that most emergency contacts were unreliable – either outdated or not timely in their response.

Asheville requires a key box by ordinance. All buildings that have a monitored fire alarm and /or sprinkler system must comply. This ordinance is for all buildings, not just new construction. As inspectors come across a business needing a key box in their normal inspection process, they inform the business that they need to install a box. The box must be sized correctly for the facility and number of keys required. "We let them decide if it would be more aesthetic for a surface verses a flush mount; but the size of the box is dictated by the number of keys it will contain," Hamilton said.

Asheville has set very specific guidelines for the placement and installation of all key boxes.
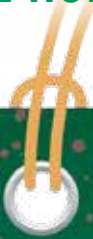
1. The placement of the box needs to be at a normal point of fire department access. It may be the front door but in some cases it may be a different entrance due to the location of the fire alarm panel.

2. Asheville regulates the height of the box. All boxes must be installed between 48" and 60" from the ground.

3. The department encourages businesses to have the box professionally installed by a local locksmith. While tamper switches are optional, many of the locksmiths recommend the boxes be installed with tamper switches and connect the tamper switch to the business' burglar alarm.

In 2009, Asheville expanded their Knox Program to include the locking FDC plugs. "We conducted a survey (of the downtown area) to see how many FDC caps were vandalized or missing. We kept coming up with such a high number of FDC caps missing that lead to concerns about sprinkler system reliability. We decided to go ahead and institute the Knox FDC Program," explained Hamilton.

Now locking plugs are required by ordinance on all new installations or if an existing building's caps are found to be missing. Prior to installing the plugs, the system must be "back flushed and inspected". It wasn't just the swivels that were missing. In many cases "we find

A Reliable System *Continued*

that the gaskets are missing which is a reliability issue," Hamilton said.

To help with department training on the FDC plug, a local sprinkler company made a mock-up of a sprinkler connection so all the firefighters had an opportunity to work with the plugs prior to their being deployed into the community.

Asheville has been very proactive in protecting their master key. All their master keys are stored in a Knox Master Key Retention Device to keep tighter control.

This tight control was very helpful when someone reported a key missing from a Sentralok unit. "We didn't lose a key but we did have a new installation that hadn't been issued a key. An employee reported the unit was missing a key. We were very quickly able to determine that no key had been issued to that unit yet so no key was missing. Being able to track the key quickly is a good feature," Hamilton explained.

As Asheville has annexed neighboring areas, they have covered the cost to re-core the boxes in those areas to their system. "Considering the time and cost, it's a good PR tool. Annexation can be viewed negatively so this is one less thing to complain about – or throw into the controversy," Hamilton shared.

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Asheville Fire has 239 firefighters who work out of 12 fire stations. They protect the largest single family residence in the US, the Biltmore House.

Christmas at the Biltmore House in Asheville, NC

A Fortified Installation

Like many departments in the 1980s, the Valley Regional Fire Authority carried a key book but there was always the concern that the keys wouldn't work. So the fire marshal at that time implemented the Knox System to help the department ensure they had the correct key. "We did it like a lot of other jurisdictions, carrying keys and wondering if they would actually work," shared current Fire Marshal Jeff Stottlemyre.

In the beginning the department required the 3200 Series surface mount lift-off model. Over the years the requirement

sprinkler system in them," said Stottlemyre. The box allows crews to determine the cause of the alarm without damaging the building. Stottlemyre elaborated, "It really comes in handy in a false alarm scenario which we deal with regularly. It allows our operational people to confirm there is or is not a problem in the building. It's worked very well for us."

The fire inspectors work with the business community on proper installation of the box which includes height and location of the box. The department relies heavily on the installation and maintenance instructions provided by the Knox Company (both can be found at knoxbox.com) "Our

inspectors are very good at educating our business community that Knox products are excellent products but the weak link can be the installation. They work to ensure the product is attached as securely as possible," explained Stottlemyre.

"We do not install the boxes. We leave that up to the contractor or the building owner but we work very diligently with them so that they install the box securely," Stottlemyre said.

"Our business community has done a very good job overall of notifying us when they do key changes. But it doesn't mean we don't run into situations where the keys

This KNOX-BOX® withstood significant physical attack by a sledgehammer. The last but most important security feature of a KNOX-BOX is *PROPER INSTALLATION.*

has evolved to surface mount hinged door models for existing structures and recess mount hinged versions for new construction. "We went to the hinged door because the chain for the lift-off door would often end up missing or not connected," Stottlemyre said. With the hinged only versions the door is always attached to the unit and there is no relying upon a chain that may or may not be attached. "Due to potential theft issues, we're now requiring recessed mounted hinged units on all new construction," said Stottlemyre. By having the unit recessed, the unit is less susceptible to tampering and an unauthorized removal.

"We only require the rapid access for buildings that have a fire alarm and /or fire

inspectors utilize the information they got from the Knox Company and promote the installation and maintenance guidelines. We recommend that boxes be installed no more than 6 feet from the ground. While each building is a little different, we try to remain consistent on the location of the box," Stottlemyre shared. (An installation height of 6 feet makes the box accessible without a ladder but not easily tampered with.)

Valley Regional Fire Authority's fire inspectors do a great job of educating property owners that the proper installation of the box is paramount to the security of the box, and this is one aspect the property owner has complete control over. "Our field

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UL® 1037 Listed

ALL KNOX® key box products are UL 1037 listed against physical attack as required by the **2012 IFC and NFPA 1**

We are very proud to have earned this prestigious rating with our product.

are outdated. When our deputy fire marshals (fire inspectors) are out in the field they confirm that the existing key in the box still works so that when our operational

In Brazil, they are called "condomínio fechado" (closed housing estate), in Argentina they are "barrios privados" (private neighborhoods). Residents of South Africa refer to them as "security villages." While most gated communities have primarily housing units and an occasional post office or car wash, residents of Nordelta near Buenos Aries, have their own hospital, three private schools, and a shopping mall. What started out as primarily an American phenomenon is spreading to areas all over the world.

Gated communities are found in various forms all across the country. Some are gated apartment complexes, while others are prestigious single-family golf communities, complete with guards at the gates. Found in almost every corner of the country, there are millions of Americans living in some form of private gated community.

Across America, more than 10 million individual housing units are in gated complexes, where access is "secured with walls or fences," according to 2010 Census Bureau data. Roughly 10 percent of the occupied homes in this country are in gated communities. In California the percentage rises to 40% and in parts of south Florida it goes much higher. The first decade of the 21st Century saw a 53% growth in occupied housing units nestled in gated communities in the USA alone.

Some people move to these communities for an enhanced feeling of security while others enjoy the perception of prestige and exclusivity. While the majority of the growth of these gated communities is located in the traditional Sunbelt states, the movement towards privacy and limited access is seen all over the country. Developers argue that in modern America these steps are needed to ward off crime and reclaim the neighborhood. Those in opposition say that these communities, resulting out of fear or the desire for secluded prestigious living creates a 'fortress mentality' that adds to the polarization and fragmentation of American society. Florida Architect and Urban Designer Marcela Camblor recently told the La Nacion (The Nation) newspaper in Buenos Aires *"The gated communities experiment has failed,"* calling them *"unsustainable from both an economic and social point of view".* Critics also claim that gates mostly offer a false sense of security, citing data that suggest that gated communities in suburban areas of the United States have no less crime than similar non-gated neighborhoods.

Gated communities do not only affect those living in the enclosed areas. They can also have an impact on the local authority in terms of their long-term planning strategies, urban development, traffic control, and the ability of emergency services to provide the best level of protection. In terms of

Firefighter accessing a private gate with a Knox® Padlock.

the delivery of emergency services, these communities offer unique challenges to fire, law enforcement and EMS providers. Can the fire department maintain the same average response times to these communities and apartment complexes or does the gate become an obstacle that slows down the responding units? Will the police routinely patrol complexes where the officer does not have easy gate access from the patrol car? Agencies that do not employ some type of reliable, fast access through limited access gates cannot provide the same level of service as the ones who do.

by Larry Pigg

Gated Styles

In an article published in *American Demographics*, researchers Edward Blakely of USC and Mary Gail Snyder of Berkeley, identify four kinds of fortressed American neighborhoods, distinguished by the primary motivations and financial ability of their residents:

- **Lifestyle** — country clubs, age restricted retirement developments

- **Prestige** — gates for status appeal

- **Security zone communities** — gates targeted against crime and traffic

- **Purpose-designed communities** — transient pipeline/oil field workers

Now that we have identified the socio-economic motivators that cause people to move 'inside the gate,' what do we do to ensure rapid emergency access?

Security vs. Convenience

Security is seldom cheap, and many times is not convenient. It is a balancing act between what is needed and desired against what is practical and affordable. The more we secure our cars, homes, and property the less convenient they become. It would be easy and convenient to leave the car doors unlocked every night with the key in the ignition. In most U.S. cities, if you tried that, you would find yourself calling a cab the next day to get to work. The same concept works in many apartment complexes and club communities. It is a balancing act to maintain egress for the residents, while enhancing the ability for emergency crews to respond quickly.

How do Emergency Crews get in?

The access gates on most gated complexes are electronically controlled with either a card reader or radio transmitter or other preemption device that activates the gate for a predetermined period of time. Some cities utilize a passive preemption device that allows the fire department to make faster access through the gate. There are some products on the market that utilize a strobe light or the siren on the apparatus to trigger the gate to operate. They all work fine until the fire department needs the gate to remain open for mutual aid, to lay fire hose across the threshold of the gate, or if there is a power outage or malfunction of a battery/solar backup. Regardless if the gates are the traditional sliding tract gates, swinging estate gates, or non-powered 'static' gates, emergency responders need to be able to gain fast reliable access in a worst-case scenario. Many gates are being retrofit around existing residential complexes. Here are some suggestions that can help:

- **Key Switches** A key switch mounted on the entry pedestal of a complex will allow fire crews to manage the operation of the gate.

- **Padlocks** A padlock mounted on the 'chain-drop' or a conventional sliding gate or in the articulating arm of a

swinging estate will allow access even during a catastrophic event including a power outage, where other electrically dependent entry systems are inoperable. They are also effective securing non-powered 'static' gates.


- **Lock Boxes** A lock box mounted near the front entry gate of a community can house various items including access cards, keys to sprinkler rooms, and location maps for hazardous materials (example: Chlorine, Ammonia or Tri-Sodium Phosphate) stored for use in apartment pools or gated community water parks.

The growth trend of gated communities is expected to rise in the next few years. This is not anything new. For thousands of years people have been building walls around their settlements or villages as a way to protect themselves from the outside world. In today's market place, if an apartment or residential development is not gated, it will not appear as safe or prestigious as the ones that do. Regardless of the motivation of the residents, the requirements for emergency responders remain the same. Fast, dependable response is a minimum requirement. The taxpayers require it. With proper planning and reasonable proactive measures, local jurisdictions can maintain a high level of response at a minimum cost to the residents. Regardless of the application, gated complexes offer both unique challenges to fire departments, and a perfect application to implement the Knox Solution.

Knox Contacts
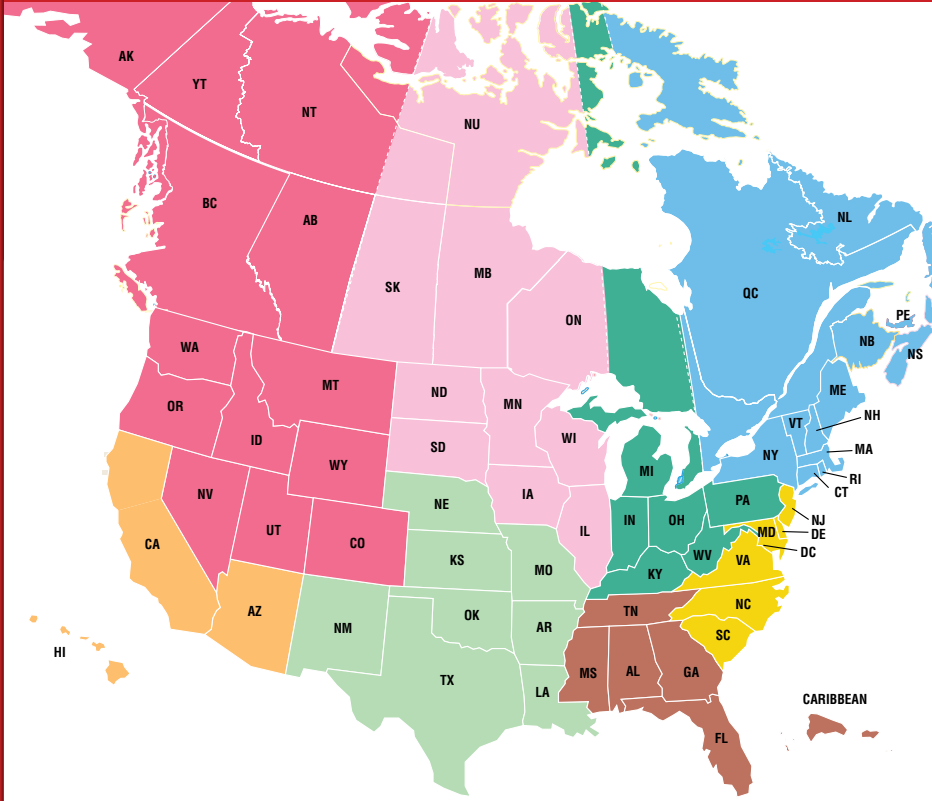
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SUPPORT CONTACTS

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
Fire Rescue East Daytona Beach, FL	January 25-26
MidWest EMS Milwaukee, WI	January 30-February 2
North Carolina Mid-Winter Conf. Concord, NC	February 8, 2013
Firehouse World San Diego, CA	February 17-21
VA Fire Chiefs Virginia Beach, VA	February 21-24
Mega Show Nassau, NY	February 23-24
EMS Today Conference Washington, DC	March 8-9
Metro Chiefs Phoenix, AZ	April 5-12
FDIC Indianapolis, IN	April 22-27
Ontario National Fire & Emergency Expo Toronto, ON	May 5-6
FireRescue Med Las Vegas, NV	May 5-7
Fire Expo Harrisburg, PA	May 17-19
NFPA Chicago, IL	June 10-13
NY Fire Verona, NY	June 12-15

2013 Authorization Order Forms

A small supply of the 2013 Commercial Authorization Order Forms is scheduled to begin arriving the week of December 10th. We ask that all orders submitted to the Knox Company in 2013 be on the new form otherwise orders may be delayed.

The 1650 Residential Knox-Box is **NOT** on the Commercial Authorization Order Form since Knox does not recommend this product for commercial applications.

The 2013 Residential Forms will be available in January. These forms are meant to assist departments who have a residential program or wish to start one.

If you would like to order additional Commercial or Residential Authorization Order Forms, please call Knox at 800-552-5669.

Thanks for your help and cooperation!

THIS WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER WITH A KNOX-BOX®!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

from Your Friends at the Knox Company

Reminder: Check for Knox Software Updates Quarterly

To check for updates, please log on to the Knox Fire Department Login area at **www.knoxbox.com** and follow the installation instructions provided on the website.

Feel free to contact Knox electronic support if you have any questions requiring technical assistance or need a login ID. 866-KNOX-BOX (866-566-9269)

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.

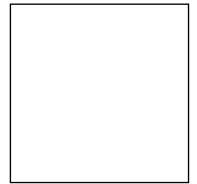4. Notify Knox immediately of loss, theft or attempted duplication of any key.

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A Fortified Installation

Continued from page 3

units need to use them they can," explained Stottlemyre.

During a recent routine inspection, a fire inspector discovered a box that looked like someone had taken a sledge hammer to it in an attempt to knock the box off the building. While the box showed the damage, it was still securely attached to the wall. The box hadn't been compromised and all contents were still safely stored inside.

This property owner had followed Knox's installation instructions to help fortify the box. "They had drilled through the wall and put a plate on the interior side of the wall rather than use lag screws. That's why thieves were unsuccessful in getting that box off the wall. "The building's owner was extremely happy with the security of the system based on the performance of the product and their installation," Stottlemyre shared. As this property owner discovered, the last line of defense in the security of the box is the installation. While the majority of the security components are engineered into the product design, the safe guarding of the box is contingent upon the correct installation of the product. As a precaution

the department canvassed neighboring businesses to make sure other businesses hadn't been impacted and found none.

Valley Regional Fire uses many different Knox products including the electronic key switch, padlocks, and KeySecure. They have also adopted the locking FDC plugs

Sprinkler systems are generally required to be back flushed every 5 years. If a property in Valley Regional Fire Authority's jurisdiction installs the locking plugs following the back flushing of the system, the department will allow the business to stretch the next back flush to 10 years saving the property owner the cost of a back flush which is considerably more than the cost of locking plugs.

All new construction projects with sprinkler systems are required to install Knox locking FDC plugs. Sprinkler systems are generally required to be back flushed every 5 years. If a property in Valley Regional Fire Authority's jurisdiction installs the locking plugs following the back flushing of the system, the department will allow the business to stretch the next back flush to 10 years saving the property owner the cost of a back flush which is considerably more than the cost of locking plugs. "In the long run it saves them money. And that's part of the educational process. It's easy to say it's going to save you money down the road but in tough economic times that can be a tough sale," explained Stottlyemyre.

The Valley Regional Fire Authority began their Knox Program back in 1989 as the Auburn Fire Department. In 2007, the Valley Regional Fire Authority was formed. This authority joined the Auburn and Pacific Fire Departments to provide service to the communities of Algona, Auburn and Pacific. Today Valley Regional Fire Authority provides service to approximately 70,000 in a 34 square mile area. ◼