



Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department Office of the Fire Marshal

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Guidelines and Specifications For: "Knox Box" Rapid Entry System

Applicable Codes and Standards:

VSFPC - Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (2018)

Introduction – What is the "Knox Box" System?
Everyone knows that seconds count in a life-threatening emergency. Yet many times, emergency responders find access blocked by locked entrance doors or gates. To help reduce delays in providing emergency assistance, Stafford County has adopted the Knox Rapid Entry System. The system improves emergency access to buildings and results in savings by eliminating property damage from forced entry.
Used by fire departments throughout the country, the Knox Rapid Entry System provides an emergency key box unique to the jurisdiction in which it is located. Only the Stafford County emergency response vehicles have a secured Rapid Entry "Knox Key" to open the Knox System locks located within Stafford County. Use of the Knox Rapid Entry System is authorized by Section 506 of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. While the Stafford County Fire Marshal's Office requires that a Knox Rapid Entry System is installed for all new buildings equipped with a fire alarm system or elevator, in most instances installation of the system at existing buildings is at the option of the building owner. Other devices such as electronic gate switches, elevator boxes or pad locks are also available. Building owners can order and install a "Knox Box" by following the guidelines below. Various types, sizes and styles are available for order directly from www.knoxbox.com or 1-800-552-5669.
When EMERGENCY access is required, the arriving emergency responder in-charge removes a Rapid Entry "Knox" key from the special security device in the vehicle and opens the building's "Knox Box" to access the designated keys for that building. After use, the emergency responder returns the keys to the building "Knox Box", locks it, and then returns the Rapid Entry "Knox" key to the security device inside the emergency vehicle.

Requirements	Code Section
Where access is restricted for emergency operations, the fire official may require the installation of a key box. Buildings equipped with a non-household fire alarm system are required to have a "Knox" key box and for large or high-hazard buildings, a larger repository "Knox" box may be required. Buildings equipped with an elevator are required to also have an additional " Elevator Knox Box " in the main elevator lobby.	VSFPC 506.1
Where required, the key box must be installed at the primary fire department entrance (i.e. the main entrance or sprinkler room if multiple main entrances exist). The box should be securely mounted in a visible location at about 4ft from grade.	VSFPC 506.1
The contents of a key box must include the following items and LABELED keys (high-rise buildings must have at least 5 sets): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a master key (preferably at least 3 sets for multistory buildings) 2) fire alarm system keys 3) elevator keys for firefighter operations (preferably also a door drop key) 4) any other keys to emergency equipment or areas 5) emergency contact information 	VSFPC 506.1
It is the building tenant or owner's responsibility to update the contents of the key box when information is outdated or locks are changed/re-keyed.	VSFPC 506.2

Installation	Code Section
Building owners/contractors can order a Knox Rapid Entry System device directly from www.knoxbox.com . A model 3200 or 4400 box with a recessed mounting is RECOMMENDED wherever possible. Be sure to use the correct installation address and zip code so that the correct box and lock are shipped for installation. Once the device has been installed, contact the Stafford County Fire Marshal's Office to arrange a time to secure the contents and lock the device. Future access to update, add or remove contents must be coordinated through the Fire and Rescue Department by calling 540-658-7200.	VSFPC 506.2