



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**FPB POLICY  
K-15-2**

**KNOX PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS AND  
PROCEDURES FOR ORDERING.  
CFC SECTION 506**

***I. PURPOSE***

This policy is intended to provide information about Knox-keyed devices and how to obtain them.

***II. SCOPE***

This policy shall apply to all buildings or sites within the City of San Diego where it has been determined that a Knox-keyed device is needed to improve accessibility for emergency responders.

***III. OVERVIEW***

The Knox Program provides San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) with a quick and easy means to access a secured building or area. It also minimizes potential costly repairs caused by forcible entry and allows the building to be re-secured quickly and easily.

***IV. DEFINITIONS***

**KNOX COMPANY:** The manufacturer/vendor of Knox boxes, cabinets, key switches, padlocks, and related accessories. This is the only company whose products can be accessed by San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

**KNOX KEY:** A key carried on all fire apparatus which enables fire crews to access any Knox device within the City of San Diego.

**KNOX BOX:** A lock box used for securely storing the keys to a gate, building, or rooms within a building.

**KNOX KEY SWITCH:** An electrical switch activated by a Knox key which opens a gate, garage door, or other electric entry door.

**KNOX LOCKING FDC PLUGS:** A lockable FDC cap which protects a sprinkler systems against vandalism and frequent cap replacement.

**Community Risk Reduction Division**

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**KNOX CABINET:** A locked data cabinet used for storing information pertinent to the operation of a building, such as Hazmat data and plant shut-down procedures. Keys to the facility can also be located within the cabinet.

**KNOX PADLOCK:** A heavy padlock openable by a Knox key.

**KEY TAG:** Attached to each key in a Knox box to identify its function.

## ***V. BACKGROUND***

When access to secured structures or areas is difficult for emergency responders, the Chief is authorized to require a Knox box or key switch to be installed in an acceptable location. The San Diego Fire-Rescue Department has had a Knox Program in place for over forty years, and cannot access lock boxes or switches manufactured by any other companies.

## ***VI. HOW TO ORDER***

Once the need for a Knox box or other Knox product has been established, the customer will be given this policy, a Knox Product Authorization Order Form with price list, a SDFD Knox Product Application Form and ordering instructions. These will be given to the customer by the Fire Prevention Bureau Knox Program Coordinator. This information can be sent by email upon request or accessed on the SDFD web site.

The customer should review this information and make a selection on the order form. If the customer needs assistance in selecting the appropriate product, he/she may contact the Fire Prevention Bureau Knox Program Coordinator for assistance. Once the selection has been made, the completed SDFD Knox Product Application Form, the completed Knox Authorization Order Form and a check for a \$189 dollar onetime City processing and inspection fee, payable to "City Treasurer" shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau Knox Program Coordinator for each install address, via US mail, or it can be dropped off at the SDFD receptionist. Once processed and approved, the applicant will receive via email the signed, approved Knox Authorization Order Form and a receipt for the City processing/inspection fee. The approved Knox Authorization Order Form is now ready to send to The Knox Company with your payment to The Knox Company for your order. The Knox Company will ship your order directly to the address specified on the order form.

## ***VII. INSTALLATION/LOCATION***

It is the customer's responsibility to ensure that all Knox products are installed securely in an approved location and manner. Knox boxes may need to be anchored to the building with lag bolts, recessed into plaster or stucco, or welded to metal fences, posts, or gates.

One Fire-Rescue Department reflective alert decal is included with each Knox box. The decal is to be mounted by Fire Department Personnel only. This reflective decal alerts fire companies as to the presence of a Knox box.

Knox boxes are to be installed within 10 feet of the main entrance to the building at a height not to exceed **SEVEN (7) FEET ABOVE FINISHED GRADE MEASURED FROM THE TOP OF THE BOX (BUT PREFERABLY AT FIVE (5) FEET)**. This height has proven to be ideal since it enables fire crews to access the Knox box quickly without the delay of setting up a ladder. Also, seven feet is high enough to discourage the idly curious. Other locations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Knox key switches shall be installed by an electrician familiar with these devices. The preferred location for mounting a key switch is at the gate control head, or adjacent to the gate or door entry key pad.

#### ***VIII. KEYS IN KNOX BOXES***

Every key placed in a Knox box shall be identified with a sturdy ID tag. Each set of keys shall be grouped together on a key ring. The keys being installed will be at the discretion of the customer, but they should be selected bearing in mind the access needs of responding fire companies. Some keys typically placed in Knox boxes include: MAIN ENTRANCE, GRAND MASTER, ELEVATOR CONTROL, MECHANICAL ROOM, FIRE ALARM PANEL, ELECTRICAL ROOM, AND ROOF ACCESS.

#### ***IX. LOCK UP OF KNOX BOX***

Knox boxes are shipped to the customer in the OPEN position. After the box has been installed, the customer must contact the SDFD Fire Prevention Bureau Knox Box Coordinator to request a lock-up/final inspection appointment. The Fire Prevention Bureau Knox Program staff will assist the customer in arranging an appointment for lock up/final inspection. All keys shall be tagged and ready for placement in the Knox box upon arrival.

***Note: The customer should notify the Fire-Rescue Department whenever a building has been re-keyed so that obsolete keys in the Knox box can be updated.***

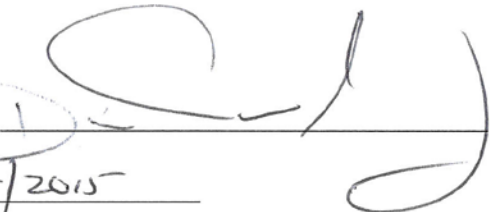
#### ***X. TESTING OF KEY SWITCH***

After a key switch has been installed, the customer must contact the SDFD Fire-Rescue Department Knox Program Coordinator to request an appointment to ensure that the Key switch was installed and working properly. The customer does not need to be present for this test. If the key switch fails to operate, the customer will be contacted to have the necessary repairs made.

**XI. NUMBER OF KEY SETS REQUIRED**

More than one set of keys is often required, especially in larger buildings. These extra sets are needed for the additional fire companies subsequently arriving at the same address. The following guidelines for number of key sets and type Knox Box Series shall be followed:

1-2 story building:	1 set of keys	3200 Series
3-4 stories:	2 sets	3200 Series
5-8 stories:	3 sets	4400 Series
9 stories and above:	4 sets	4400 Series
Home / Residential:	1 set of keys	1600 Series

Promulgated by: 

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