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Knox Box FAQ

The Knox Box Entry System Program is an effort by the Winchester Fire and Rescue Department to provide property owners within our city a secure system that provides rapid, non-destructive, emergency access to residential and commercial buildings.

What is a Knox Box?

A Knox Box is a secure key vault that is installed on the exterior of a building near the main entrance. This box contains building keys to provide access for the fire department in emergency situations. The fire department maintains master keys for the Knox Boxes in secure locations.

Knox Box YouTube Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdKNNJEoL6U&t=5s>

Is the Knox Box required?

The Fire and Rescue Department has the ability to require a key repository box per the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. The department requires a Knox Box on all new commercial buildings where sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems or an elevator is installed. In addition to a Knox Box for key storage, we also require Knox Locking Fire Department Connection caps to help protect the sprinkler system investment that a building owner has made. Many businesses in the area have had Knox Boxes installed on their buildings since the program started in the late 1980's.

Where can I buy a Knox Box?

Knox Box devices may only be purchased through the Knox Box Company: www.knoxbox.com(link is external) or 1-800-552-5669. When ordering the box, an area zip code must be keyed that coincides with the City of Winchester. The proper zip code for the City of Winchester is 22601.

Where do I install the Knox Box?

Knox Boxes shall be mounted as near as possible to the primary entry door and shall not be visually obstructed. This normally will be the main entrance door to the business. The box should not be located further than six (6) feet laterally from the door. The Knox Box should be installed no higher than five (5) feet or no lower than three (3) feet above the ground or walk area. The Knox Box for a gate shall be located on the gate or on a fence or wall within six (6) feet of the gate. The Fire Marshal's Office should be contacted prior to installation to ensure proper location.

How do I secure my keys inside the box?

Keys to exterior doors, interior doors, electrical and mechanical rooms, fire alarm panels, and elevator recall are normally kept on one (1) ring inside the Knox Box. After the Knox Box is installed, the owner or their designee must contact the Winchester Fire Marshal's Office (see contact info below) to schedule an appointment to secure the keys and lock the Knox Box.