



Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department Office of the Fire Marshal

1225 Courthouse Road, PO BOX 339, Stafford, VA 22555
(540) 658-7200 · FAX (540) 658-4545 · www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm



Everyone knows that seconds count in a life-threatening medical emergency or a fire. Yet many times, firefighters responding to an emergency find access blocked by locked entrance doors or gates. To help reduce delays in providing emergency assistance, the Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department has adopted the use of the Knox Rapid Entry System.

What is the Knox Rapid Entry System?

Used by fire departments throughout the country, the primary component of the Knox Rapid Entry System is a key box unique to the jurisdiction in which it is located. Only the Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department has the key to open the Fire Department access boxes located within Stafford County. The system can improve emergency access to buildings and result in savings by eliminating property damage from Fire Department forced entry.

Use of the Knox Rapid Entry System is authorized by Section 506 of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. The Code specifies that the Fire Department may require a key box containing access keys be installed at the entrance to structures or areas where access for the purpose of life safety or firefighting is restricted. *While the Stafford County Fire Marshal's Office requires that a Knox Rapid Entry System is installed for all buildings equipped with a Fire Alarm system, in most instances installation of the system at other buildings is at the option of the building owner.*

How Does the System Work?

Building owners install, or arrange for installation of a Knox key box on the exterior of the building at the main entrance point or other approved location (sprinkler room, fire alarm control room, etc. when a main entrance is not available). The box is manufactured with a lock which can only be opened with the key that is issued solely to the Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department. Ambulances and fire trucks in Stafford County are each equipped with one Knox box key, held in a special security device on the vehicles.

When EMERGENCY access is required, the arriving Fire Department member in charge removes the key from the special security device in the vehicle and opens the Knox Box to remove the building main entrance key. After use, the Fire Department member returns the entrance key to the Knox Box and locks it, and then returns the special Knox Box key to the security device inside the emergency vehicle.

What Should I Consider for My Building?

Depending on your building systems or characteristics the following items are required and/or recommended per Section 506 of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code:

- A Knox Key Box is likely REQUIRED since my building is equipped with a Fire Alarm System
- A Knox Key Box is RECOMMENDED since my building is NOT equipped with a Fire Alarm System
- A Master Key and label is needed in the box
- A Fire Alarm system key and label is needed in the box
- Elevator keys for firefighter control and labels are needed in the box
- Emergency contact information is needed in the box
- A Knox Gate Access Key Switch (4500) is RECOMMENDED for rapid fire department vehicle access



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What are the Steps to Obtaining/ Installing the Knox Rapid Entry System?

When a building owner chooses or is directed to install a key box, a model 3200 or 4400 series box may be purchased from the Knox Company (www.knoxbox.com or call 866-625-4563) using a Stafford County authorized and signed application. Upon purchase, the Knox Box is shipped directly from the manufacturer to the purchaser in the unlocked position and the purchaser installs the empty box according to the included installation guidelines. Where installation allows, a recessed box is recommended. Once the box is installed, the purchaser makes an appointment to meet a Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department official at the building to approve the box and installation. Upon approval, the building owner places the appropriate keys (master key, fire alarm system keys, elevator keys, swipe cards, etc) and emergency contact information inside the box. Then the Stafford County Fire and Rescue official locks and secures the box. Future access to add or remove a key from the box should be coordinated through the Fire Marshals Office. Building owners may call the Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department at 540-658-7200 to make an appointment so that keys can be changed.

Who Can I Call If I Have Additional Questions?

- 1) Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department
1225 Courthouse Rd
P.O. Box 339
Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department
540-658-7200
www.staffordfirerescue.com

- 2) The Knox Company
1601 W. Deer Valley Road
Phoenix, AZ 85027
(866)-625-4563
www.knoxbox.com