



## FIRE DEPARTMENT – FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

1600 Los Gamos Drive, Suite 345, San Rafael, CA 94901 - Phone (415) 485-3308 - Fax (415) 453-1627  
- [www.srfd.org](http://www.srfd.org)

---

---

### **Fire Prevention Standard** **Key Box/Key Switch Installation/Pad Lock Ordering**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this Standard is to document the requirements for Knox key boxes, key switches and padlocks; it is promulgated pursuant to provisions in the California Fire Code as adopted by the San Rafael Municipal Code.

#### **General:**

The California Fire Code stipulates “Where access to or within a structure or an area is restricted because of secured openings or where immediate access is necessary for life-saving or fire-fighting purposes, the fire code official is authorized to require a key box be installed in an approved location. The key box shall be of an approved type and shall contain keys to gain necessary access as required by the fire code official”. After investigation of the available products, it has been determined that the product line offered by the Knox Company, of Phoenix, AZ, satisfies the security needs of the Fire Department and the community.

San Rafael Municipal Code Section 4.08 Fire Code amended section 506.1 states all electronic operated vehicular gates, including gates serving single-family dwellings, shall have an approved key switch override system mounted on a stanchion or wall as approved by the Fire Code Official.

#### **Ordering Procedures**

1. Use the electronic ordering process at <https://www.knoxbox.com/>
2. Knox boxes are available in different sizes and in different installation configurations (recessed/surface mount) as of January 1, 2014 all Knox key boxes come pre-wired with security tamper switches. The minimum acceptable box is the model 3200 series, removable lid, for small businesses or applications with 10 or fewer keys. The 4400 single lock Knox Box should be used for large numbers of keys in excess of 10 keys. (Consult the Knox Box website at <http://www.knoxbox.com> for descriptions of the box.)
3. For new construction, recessed mounted boxes (not surface mounted boxes) must be used. For new box installations on existing buildings, recessed boxes are preferred but surface-mounted boxes are permitted.

## **Ordering:**

- Go the Knox web site at <http://www.knoxbox.com/>
- Click on the red BUY button to access the Know Online Store.
- Complete the ordering process.
- Use San Rafael Fire Department for department name.

## **Knox Box Installation Procedures:**

1. The box, which will be sent to the applicant, comes with the door off or open (in the case of the hinged model), and in the locked position. The installer of the box shall install the unit per manufacturers instructions & the following additional requirements:
  - a. Locate the Knox box in an obvious location, preferably near the main entrance to the building or, as an alternative, near the fire alarm panel room (if there is one).
  - b. Mounting height shall be 72" – 78" above the adjacent walking area.
  - c. Area shall be free of shrubbery or other vegetation that may interfere with the firefighters ability to access the Knox box.
  - d. Use heavy "lag bolts" or other sturdy means to secure the box to the wall.

Note: Always mount your KNOX-BOX to a secure, solid wall, beam or post.

- e. Knox key boxes come equipped with the tamper switch already installed. It is your choice as to whether you wish to have it connected to your security system. If you choose to do so, the switch should be connected with, and tested by, your burglar alarm company prior to "lock up". The wiring will not be accessible once the face is secured.
- f. If you have any questions concerning the installation of the Knox box contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (415) 485-3308

## **Knox Gate Key Installation**

Have a licensed electrician install the unit in accordance with the manufacturer's specification on the key pad or electronic control device.

## **Required keys**

1. The following keys shall be assembled and have a durable ID tag affixed to them with the door, room, or suite number clearly visible:
  - a. One for the main entry.
  - b. One each for the Electrical room, Fire Alarm Panel Room, and Sprinkler Riser Room.
  - c. One for fire alarm or sprinkler system padlocks.
  - d. One for each elevator car for Fire Department override (where applicable).

- e. For very large buildings: One grand master key for each floor, each wing, i.e., five story building with two wings = 10 grand masters.

### **Property Contact Information**

Along with keys, place 24-hour contact information on an index sized card in the box. This is to include:

- a. Owner
- b. Property Manager
- c. Security Company
- d. Fire Alarm Company

### **Final Steps:**

1. Call the Fire Prevention Bureau line at (415) 485-3308 to arrange for a “lock up” or test of the Knox key switch. Please have available the address of the job site where the box or key switch is installed, your permit number (if one was issued for the job) and suggested times you will be able to meet an inspector on site.
2. The Fire Inspector will contact you later to set up an inspection time.
3. The Fire Inspector will come out and verify the workability and labeling of the keys and information contained on your property contact card, and then lock the keys into the Knox box.

Note: If suite numbers or letters change at any time or keys change due to tenant changes, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau to assist with the replacement keys.

### **Gate Switches**

1. All electronic operated vehicular gates, including gates serving single-family dwellings, shall have an approved key switch override system mounted on a stanchion or wall as approved by the Fire Code Official.
2. Once the key switch is installed call the Fire Prevention Bureau at (415) 485-3308 to arrange for an inspector to come out. Please have available the address of the job site where the key switch is installed, your permit number (if one was issued for the job) and suggested times you will be able to meet an inspector on site.

The box or key switch will not be used for fire prevention inspection purposes (other than yearly verification of the workability of the keys) or police matters, or if the building owner or tenant has locked themselves out.

### **Padlocks**

Padlocks can also be purchased as needed.