VI. KNOX BOX REQUIREMENTS AND ORDERING PROCEDURE

A. Purpose

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

B. 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.

C. Overview

The Knox Program provides San Diego Fire-Rescue Department crews 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.

D. Definitions

Knox Box: A lock box used for securely storing the keys to a gate, building, or rooms within a building.

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 Company: The manufacturer and seller of Knox boxes, cabinets, key switches, padlocks, and related accessories. This is the only company whose products can be opened by the 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 Padlock: A heavy padlock that can be opened with a Knox key.

Knox Key Switch: An electrical switch activated by a Knox key which opens a gate or garage door.

Key Tag: Tag attached to each key in a Knox Box to identify its function.

E. General Requirements

When access to secured structures or areas is difficult for emergency responders, the Chief is authorized to require that a Knox box be installed in an acceptable location. This location is usually within ten feet of the main entrance to the building, positioned at a height of approximately seven feet above floor level. Other locations or devices may be considered when conditions warrant and upon departmental review.

F. How to Order

1. Once the need for a Knox Box or other Knox product has been established, the customer will be given a Knox product order form which includes a price list. This will be given to the customer by either the engine company or Fire Prevention Bureau personnel. The information can also be mailed, emailed or faxed to the customer.

2. The customer should review this information and make the selection on the order form. Once the selection has been made, the completed order form and payment should be sent to the Knox Company. The Knox Company will ship the order directly to the address provided on the order form.

3. If the customer needs assistance in selecting the appropriate product, he/she may contact the Knox Company and obtain the assistance of a sales representative.

G. Installation

1. It is the customer's responsibility to ensure that 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.

2. Knox key switches must be installed by an electrician familiar with these devices. The switch should be located in an accessible location. The preferred location for mounting is at the gate/door control panel or in a single-gang electrical switch box outside and near the gate/door. Key switches should be mounted at approximately four feet above finished grade.

3. A red "Fire Department" alert decal is provided by the Knox Company with each Knox Box. This red decal should be mounted in the vicinity of the Knox box, generally low on the door, door frame, or window glass. It may be installed by either the customer or the engine/truck company at the time the Knox box is locked up. This red decal alerts fire companies to the presence of a Knox box.

H. Keys in Knox Box

1. Keys secured in the Knox box will be at the discretion of the customer, however, selection should be based on the access needs of responding fire companies

2. Every key placed in a Knox box must be identified, preferably with a sturdy tag. Each set of keys shall be grouped together on a key ring. Tags and key rings may be purchased from the Knox Company at the time the Knox box is ordered.

3. Keys typically placed in Knox boxes include: MAIN ENTRANCE, GRAND MASTER, ELEVATOR CONTROL, MECHANICAL ROOM, FIRE ALARM PANEL, SPRINKLER RISER ROOM, ELECTRICAL ROOM AND ROOF ACCESS.

I. 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 Fire-Rescue Department to request lock-up since only the Department has a key. The Fire Prevention Bureau Knox coordinator will assist the customer in arranging for the lock-up to take place. Most often, the engine company in whose district the Knox box is located will perform the lock-up. This may take some time, depending on the availability of both parties. All keys should be tagged and ready for placement in the Knox box when the engine company arrives. **Contents shall always be returned to the Knox box before leaving the premises.**

J. Testing/Re-Setting of Key Switch

1. The customer should contact the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department after their key switch is installed. The local engine company will test the key switch to ensure it works properly. This test may be done at the convenience of the engine company and the customer does not need to be present. If the key switch fails to operate, the customer will need to be informed to make the necessary repairs made.

2. **When a key switch is used at an incident it is imperative that it be re-set by the operations crews before leaving the scene.** This will allow the gate to return to its normal operating mode, and will preclude the need for a return visit to re-set the key switch.

K. 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 arriving at the same address. A larger Knox box may be required if storage is needed for several sets of keys or key cards. The following is a guide as to the number of key sets required:

Security Gate only, or	
1-story building	1 set
2-3 stories	2 sets
4-8 stories	3 sets
9-15 stories	4 sets
16-20 stories	5 sets
21+ stories	10 sets

L. Documenting Knox Device Installation

Once a Knox box, key switch, or padlock is installed, it is important that the Department know it exists. This necessitates the notification to FCC Response Planning that a device is installed. An Alert File (FD-650) needs to be sent to FCC that includes the building address, the building name and the location of the Knox device(s) (box, key switch or padlock). With this information entered into the CAD, fire units dispatched to an incident will have the Knox device location appear on the MDC/MDT. It is the responsibility of the person who performed the lock-up to submit the documentation to FCC.