



CITY OF PORTLAND  
**Portland Fire & Rescue**  
1300 SE Gideon Street  
Portland OR 97202



Attachment # 1  
FMO Policy CE K-2  
Use of Lock Boxes  
August 23, 2011

## LOCK BOX FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is a lock box?

A lock box is an entry system that allows Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R) to gain entry to your property in the event of an emergency. The components of a lock box include a UL listed steel access box (or other access devices) with a UL listed steel lid, lock and key controlled by the Fire Department. The Knox Box Rapid Entry System was adopted as the system of choice in July of 2002, with the existing MIWA boxes being allowed to continue.

### When do I need to provide a lock box?

If any of the following criteria apply to your building, a lock box may be required:

- Multi-family housing with “**restricted access**”.
- Moorages with “**restricted access**”.
- Locations that have chronic false alarms.
- Any structure where access is **unduly difficult**, or where immediate access is necessary for life saving or firefighting purposes.
- Commercial buildings with “**restricted access**” without 24 hour, on-site security.
- Any building at the owner’s request.

### Is a permit required to have a lock box?

Yes. A permit is required so the appropriate information can be made available to emergency responders. Without the permit, PF&R **will not** be able to service your lock box. The permitting process is also useful when updating keys and owner/occupant information.

### Is there a permit fee?

Yes, the fee is \$35.00.

### Where can I purchase the required lock box?

An original Knox order form can be obtained at the Permit Office located at 1300 SE Gideon St., Portland OR 97202. The permit office phone number is (503) 823-3712. Knox orders will not be processed without a permit number, authorized PF&R signature and complete installation information. The box can be purchased through the Knox Company at: (800) 552-5669.

### What size box do I need?

Small: Series 3200 accommodates up to 10 keys.

Large: Series 4400 accommodates up to 50 keys.

## **Where do I install my lock box?**

**Proper installation is extremely important. Installation should meet the following guidelines:**

- Near a main entrance on the addressed side of the building.
- No more than 6 feet above the ground.
- Preferably connected for tamper monitoring when the building has an alarm system.

### **Installation Considerations:**

- Boxes mounted closer to the ground are more susceptible to criminal activity and are subject to dirt, dust and debris getting into the lock by wind or leaf blowers.
- Special attention should be given to the type of box, method of mounting, and security alarming of the box.

## **Which keys need to be in the lock box?**

The entry key for the building must be in the lock box (preferably the main entrance key)

Other applicable emergency keys that may be included in the lock box:

- Alarm room
- Elevator room
- Mechanical room
- Sprinkler control room
- Stairwell

**Note:** All Keys must be labeled appropriately.

## **What if I change my building keys?**

Any change in emergency access keys will require a call to the Fire Marshal's Office at (503) 823-3712 to update the lock box (i.e. lock changes, occupant changes).

**Important:** *For security reasons, new keys may not be mailed to the office – an appointment must be made with your inspector.*

## **How secure will my keys be in this lock box?**

The only access key to the lock box is carried on PF&R's emergency response apparatus. The Knox system is a very high security key, and cannot be duplicated except by the Knox Company. The MIWA lock cylinder cannot be picked and the key can only be duplicated by an authorized dealer.

## **Should I use a recessed or surface mounted lock box?**

For new construction or renovations, we suggest that you use a recessed box to increase your security. This will keep the box out of public view and protect it from vandals.