

CHAPTER 20
KEY BOX FOR RAPID EMERGENCY ENTRY

20.1 Purpose. Some properties in the Township are equipped with automatic alarm systems or fire suppression systems or standpipes. The automatic systems may cause the Oakfield Township Fire Department to be summoned at a time when the building or business is not occupied or when an occupant is not available to provide entry for the Fire Department. The purpose of this chapter is to allow access to certain properties by a key box device with a standardized key or access code in the possession of the Fire Department to allow swift and safe entry into structures without unnecessary damage from forceful entry.

20.2 Definitions. The following words and phrases shall have the following meanings, except in those instances where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

- (1) "Fire Official" means the Oakfield Township Fire Chief or member of the Fire Department designated by the Fire Chief to perform the functions under this chapter.
- (2) "Key Box" means a secure container, such as a "Knox Box" brand container, of a size and style approved by the Fire Official that uses a master key or security key code possessed by the Fire Department.
- (3) "Responsible Party" shall mean the person(s) charged with the responsibility for the occupancy, building or business owner. In addition to any other Responsible Party as defined, the owner of the building or premises shall be a Responsible Party for purposes of this chapter.
- (4) "Security Cap" means a Fire Department Connection (FDC) Plug and Cap approved for use in Oakfield Township by the Fire Official utilizing 2 1/2" national standard thread pattern.
- (5) "Security Padlock" means a padlock approved by the Fire Official that utilizes the approved key code utilized by the Fire Department.

20.3 Required Use of Key Box.

- (1) **Mandatory Key Boxes for Fire Suppression and Standpipe Systems; Automatic Alarm Systems.** All buildings protected by an automatic fire suppression and/or standpipe system, or an automatic alarm system shall be equipped with a Key Box, installed at a location approved by the Fire Official.
- (2) **Mandatory Key Boxes for Certain Other Locations.** If the Fire Official determines that access to or within a commercial, industrial, institutional, or multifamily use building is unduly difficult because of secured openings and immediate access is necessary for life saving or firefighting purposes, then it shall be equipped with a Key Box, to be installed at a location approved by the Fire Official.
- (3) **Mandatory Storage Cabinet.** In occupancies storing or dispensing Hazardous Materials (as defined in the currently adopted version of the International Fire Code),

a Hazardous Materials Cabinet may be required by written notice of the Fire Official. This cabinet will serve to store MSDS and other information as required.

- (4) **Automatic Gates.** When a property is accessed through a secured gate or cross arm that impedes ingress through required Fire Lanes by means of a key or swipe card, it shall be equipped with a Key Switch to be installed at a location approved by the Fire Official.
- (5) **Security Padlock.** When a property is protected by a locked fence or gate and where immediate access to the property is necessary for life saving and firefighting purposes, it shall be equipped with a Security Padlock to be installed at a location approved by the Fire Official. It shall then be the responsibility of the Responsible Party to see that the fence or gate is secured properly so that the Security Padlock is accessible.
- (6) **Construction Sites.** When a construction site is to be secured by a locked fence or gate, that site will fall under subsection (5) above, during the duration of construction or until said fence or gate is removed.
- (7) **Security of Fire Department Connections.** When a building is protected by an automatic sprinkler and/ or standpipe system and the fire department connection is exposed to vandalism, the Fire Official may require that a Security Cap be installed.
- (8) **Non-Applicability to Particular Dwellings.** This chapter shall not apply to owner occupied one and two family dwellings. With the approval of the Fire Official, owners of single and two family occupancies may participate voluntarily utilizing a Residential Key Box.

20.4 Key Box Contents. The Key Boxes shall contain, but not be limited to the following items as designated by the Fire Official:

- (1) Labeled keys to locked points of ingress, whether in interior or exterior of such buildings.
- (2) Labeled keys to the locked mechanical rooms.
- (3) Labeled keys to any fence or secured areas not provided with a separate Key Box as required by Section 20.3 (4), (5) or (6).
- (4) Labeled keys to any other areas that may be required by the Fire Official.
- (5) A card containing the emergency contact people and phone numbers for each occupancy.
- (6) Floor plans of the rooms within the building may also be required, showing locations of shut offs.
- (7) Hazardous Materials MSDS as required.

20.5 Alert Decals. Alert decals to alert fire companies of the presence of security features covered by this chapter, shall be displayed on any outside doors or windows as designated by the Fire Official.

20.6 Compliance and Penalties.

- (1) After adoption of this chapter, all buildings and facilities newly constructed, approved for construction, or under construction but for which a certificate of occupancy has not been issued, shall be required to provide a Key Box if so required by this chapter prior to occupancy.
- (2) All existing buildings and facilities described in Section 20.3 shall provide a Key Box if so required by this chapter within 90 days after written notice from the Township.
- (3) The cost of purchasing, installing and maintaining the approved Key Box shall be borne by the Responsible Party.
- (4) The Responsible Party or Parties shall be responsible for a violation of this chapter.
- (5) In addition to other remedies, failure to comply with this chapter is grounds for revocation of a building permit or certificate of occupancy by the Building Official.

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