



**From: Kelli Williams, Chief Communications Officer
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Knox ‘HomeBox’ allows quick, easy entry to homes during emergency

Previously only available for businesses, the new Knox “HomeBox” — a secure, metal box mounted on the outside of a home or business where keys and other items can be safely stored until needed — is now available for residences, Deputy Fire Chief/Fire Marshal David Topping said recently.

“The Knox HomeBox allows firefighters to enter a home quickly, with no damage, in the event of an emergency,” Topping said. “If the resident isn’t home or is unable to open the door, we can get their house key from the Knox HomeBox, enter the residence and do what we need to do.”

The Knox HomeBox is a “voluntary alternative to forced entry, delayed entry or no entry” when firefighters are called to a residence for assistance, according to the company’s website, www.knoxbox.com.

Only firefighters can unlock the Knox HomeBox, Topping said.

“Every one of our fire trucks has a master key that opens these boxes,” he said. “So when we respond to an alarm or a medical call, we don’t have to wait for a ‘key holder’ to get to us. And in cases of fire, we can gain entry into the structure without breaking windows or doors, which helps contain the fire in some cases and sometimes results in less property damage.”

In addition to keys, other items can be stored inside the Knox Box as well, such as floor plans, access cards, directions, warnings of hazardous materials on the premises and other information.

The boxes are purchased by the property owner and keyed to a single master key controlled by the Bartlesville Fire Department. Bartlesville residents may order the boxes online, at www.knoxbox.com, though the purchase must be authorized by Topping to be finalized.

“Residents (or business owners) can order a Knox HomeBox online by going to the website and clicking on ‘Products/Place Order.’ Then they can put in Bartlesville’s information, either by zip code or city and state information, and our authorization will come up. They can pick out the model they want, but the purchase is then pending my approval. The company will send me an email requesting authorization. Once I approve the selection and send the authorization back, the transaction is approved.

“When the box comes in, the property owner will contact me and we’ll go out and open the box for them so they can install it.”

Topping said the boxes screw onto the structure from the inside, and that it takes about an hour to install one.

“Once the box is installed, the property owner can call us and we’ll go back, get their keys and anything else they want in the box and lock it in the box for them,” he said.

For more information, contact Topping at drtopping@cityofbartlesville.org or at 918-338-4097.