



## PRESS RELEASE

**Date:** August 9, 2010

**Contact:** Neal Olson, Operation Chief/PIO; Jeff Donahue, Fire Marshal

**Subject: Polk County Fire District No.1 Implements the Knox® Rapid Entry System for the Business and Residential Community**

In an effort to better serve the businesses and residents that live within the response area of Polk County Fire District No. 1



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(PCFD No.1), the District has decided to implement the Knox® Rapid Entry System. This system consists of several different products such as key vaults, padlocks, and key switches which allow fire department access to properties faster and without forced entry damage.

“For approximately the past six years PCFD No.1 provided and used a key box system like this, but we were limited to what type of key box was available,” stated Captain Barry Warden who manages the program. “Another limitation with our current system was the lack of additional locking products that could be opened with our key, so we had nothing to give to residents that had driveway gates or had other similar locking needs” continued Captain Warden.

“By switching to the Knox® rapid entry system,” says Fire Chief Jason Cane, “we’ve joined fire departments across the county, including our neighbors Dallas Fire Department, in using a system that is designed to provide fast access to a building in an emergency which saves lives and property, in addition to preventing costly forced entry damage to the property.” “Our department,” continued Chief Cane, “will use a unique high security Knox® master key specifically assigned to PCFD No.1 that will open all Knox® devices in our jurisdiction.”

“A big problem we have is residential medical emergencies where the person who needs help is living alone and can’t get to the door to let our Paramedics in.” says PCFD No.1 EMS Division Chief Mike Mayfield. “Our only option in many of these situations is to force our way into the home which involves breaking a door or window, causing damage and expense to the owner. With the purchase and installation of a Knox® residential key box, our Paramedics can rapidly enter the home unassisted, getting aid to the patient faster, in addition to preventing forced entry damage to the home, which can place added stress on the patient.” EMS Division Chief Mayfield states that, “the Knox® system is ideal for people that have a history of medical problems, may be recuperating from a hospital stay, living alone, or persons that use an electronic calling/medical alert service”.

For persons that may have a temporary medical condition that may require Paramedic response, PCFD No.1 has purchased a limited number of “loaner” residential boxes that can be hung on a home owner’s door.

According to PCFD No.1 Operations Division Chief Neal Olsen “It has become more routine than not that our emergency response crews are faced with situations which require the decision of either to wait until a responsible party arrives on scene to unlock access doors or to gain entry using forcible entry methods. The longer we wait, the bigger the fire becomes and in the case of a false alarm, needless damage is created by forcing our way in. By installing a Knox® key box, the business and or homeowner owner is in reality helping us protect their property, especially if you have a gate across your access driveway.”

“On the fire prevention side”, says Fire Marshal Jeff Donahue, “if your business or building has a fire alarm system or a fire sprinkler system, I would highly recommend getting a key box in addition to the fire department connection caps for your sprinkler system. The key box provides quicker access to the system controls, allowing us to investigate and mitigate the problem faster. The fire department sprinkler connection caps prevent items from being shoved in the fire department connections which, if blocked, may prevent us from supporting the sprinkler system with our engines during a fire. “

If you currently have the old style key box that was provided to you from the Fire District, emergency response units will continue to carry the key for that box in addition to the new Knox® Master Key. If you are interested in replacing this box, purchasing a Knox® key box or other emergency rapid access locking device, or have any questions regarding this system, contact Polk County Fire District No.1 @503.838.1510 or visit their web site at [www.polkno1.org](http://www.polkno1.org). You can also visit the Knox® Company web site at [www.knoxbox.com](http://www.knoxbox.com).