



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, December 02, 2003

Study Session/Special Mtg

Item -4

Lock Box Presentation, Fire Department Request

The Fire Prevention Bureau will present an overview of the Lock Box program and the benefit it provides to the community, individual business owners, fire department operations as well as safety benefits to fire personnel. A request will be made to entertain the adoption of a future ordinance requiring participation in the program.

Staff Contact: Fred Hotz

What are lock boxes?

Lock boxes are boxes that are attached to structures or some property that are used to gain access. These boxes are very common in the real estate business. A key to the home is placed in the box. In order to access the home, an agent must have a key to the box. In very similar fashion, this method of quick and secure access has been developed in the fire and other emergency services. The main difference is in the construction of the boxes (as will be demonstrated by passing around an actual model box). These



fortified boxes, and or vaults, are mounted at an accessible location on your building and the necessary access keys or cards are secured inside. Pertinent information on your business (such as phone numbers for after-hour contact, location of fire sprinkler equipment, etc.) can also be placed in the box. The lock box is keyed specifically for the Grand Island Fire Department and would be used only in case of emergency or to ensure safety of the property.

Benefits:

Through the years our department has been presented with keys to properties, which we have maintained and were to use in the event of an emergency. We have come to terms with the fact that the mass number of keys kept on fire apparatus has become unmanageable. Two years ago the Knox Box company offered us a solution that provides these benefits:

1. Quick access to building:
 - ✓ without damage to doors
 - ✓ to find cause of fire alarm
 - ✓ to extinguish fires
2. Correct fire alarm problems without building owner or representative needing to be present immediately.
3. Ability to secure the building if Engine Company is needed for new assignment prior to responsible party's arrival.
4. Firefighter safety

Security:

- 1) Key Box located on every truck
- 2) Key only on trucks
- 3) Tracking system and password access



Who currently owns boxes?

Businesses, Private Entities, Health Facility, County Buildings

- ✚ Total of 14 boxes installed
- ✚ Another 19 purchased and ready to install on our schools



Ordinance

Currently 7,000 communities in the United States utilize the Knox Box program. We have examined numerous programs and ordinances in an attempt to provide Grand Island with the best approach to our particular community. We have concluded that an ordinance requiring participation in the program best serves our community. If the City Council is willing to consider such an ordinance, we would like to create a draft and have it approved by the Legal Department for presentation at a future Council Meeting.