

September 18, 2019

To: Mark Meyers, City Administrator
From: Robert Gagnon, Fire Chief
Subject: Key Box Program

Chapter 5 of the International Fire code authorizes the fire code official to require a key box for life safety or firefighting purposes. The intent is to provide an immediate nondestructive manner to enter structures during emergency response. The current key box system, Supra, has been in place since the inception of the program in the early 2000's. Due to newer Bluetooth technology, Supra is discontinuing support for the PIN code access pads which opens 90% of the key boxes currently in use.

The options being explored:

1) STAY WITH CURRENT SUPRA TRACESS SYSTEM



This will require an upgrade to the newer Bluetooth technology carried by Supra. This would also require replacing 387 of the 425 existing commercial key box lids at a cost of \$273 ea. or \$105,651 and 30 residential boxes at a cost of \$176 ea. or \$5,280. The limitation of the new technology is the life expectancy of the lithium batteries within the key box lid. The units are warranted for one year; however, the batteries are rated for 7 years / 2,500 uses. Given our light use, Supra estimated battery life at 10–15 years.

The accountability feature has been a key advantage to the Supra system. Both commercial and residential customers have inquired about key activity which we could prove legitimate use.

2) KNOX COMPANY KEY BOX SYSTEMS

Moving to the Knox Box system would require an investment in not only hardware and software, but also the replacement of all current key boxes in Norton Shores and Roosevelt Park (425 Commercial 30 Residential). Knox has two box options with the major differences being the barrel and the accountability systems.

A) KNOX E LOCK SYSTEM

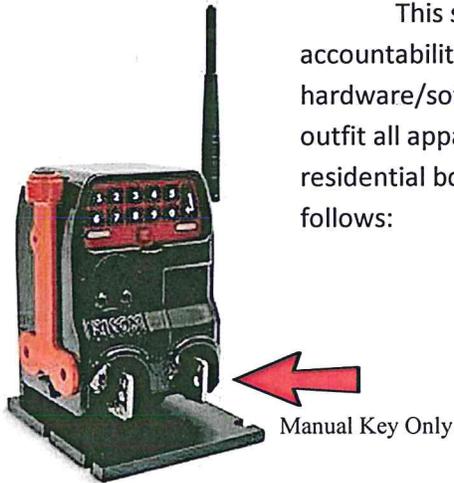
The E lock system features an electronic key with total accountability. It also features a manual key for mutual aid or other like use. The system is cloud based and requires a hardware/software apparatus. The installation of all commercial and residential boxes fitted with the E lock key barrel is estimated as follows:



- Replace 298 surface mount boxes (70% of boxes in use) @ \$579 each or \$172,542. After one year surface mount price increases to \$662 ea.
- Replace 127 recessed mount boxes (30% of boxes in use) @ \$632 each or \$80,264. After one year the recessed mount price increases to \$704 ea.
- Replace 30 residential boxes @ \$423 each or \$12,690.

B) KNOX KEY SECURE 5 SYSTEM

This system utilizes a manual key that has limited accountability. The system is cloud based and requires a hardware/software investment of approximately \$16,136 to outfit all apparatus. Installation of all commercial and residential boxes utilizing the manual key is estimated as follows:



- Replace 298 surface mount boxes (70% of boxes in use) @ \$432 each or \$128,736
- Replace 127 recessed mount boxes (30% of boxes in use) @ \$472 each or \$59,944
- Replace 30 residential boxes @ \$187 each or \$5,610.

Initially, businesses were required to purchase their lock boxes, while residential use was optional. We are seeking input from City Council as to how we should proceed with the lock box program. Do we pass the upgrade cost to the owners or should the city replace the lock boxes? Does the city share the cost? Does the city cover the costs?

I would be available to discuss this at the upcoming City Council work session.