



MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD.

FLEET MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

NUMBER: 23-03

April 18, 2023

Building systems generic key sets

Background:

During an emergency incident, MCFRS recognizes the importance of the ability to gain control of elevators and fire alarm systems within the affected buildings. The primary means of gaining control of these building systems are through keys provided by the building owners or building management to the fire department through the building's Knox Box systems.

Companies assigned to this task have found problems due to lack of available key sets or the upkeep of the keysets found in the Knox Box.

Current State:

The Small Tools Section has obtained common sets of keys for Elevator Firefighter Service (red carabiner) and Fire Alarm Systems (blue carabiner). The key sets are on the appropriately colored carabiner per Montgomery County regulations. The sets of keys will be distributed to all front-line engine companies, truck companies, rescue squads, and the 3 current EMS Duty Officers. It is important to note that these keys are amongst the most common in use for these purposes, are not guaranteed to work on every building in our jurisdiction, and are intended as back-ups for emergency use.

Regular checking of the keys provided in building knox boxes is highly recommended.

Action Needed:

1. Keys should be kept on the apparatus in a common place and accounted for each day. Both key sets should be added to the apparatus inventories and on the daily apparatus checkout procedure. It is recommended to keep the alarm keys with the driver's position. On engines, it is recommended to keep the elevator keys in the officer's high-rise pack; on special services, it is recommended to keep the keys with the elevator hoist way key sets.
2. The primary keys for the controlling the elevators and fire alarm system are still the building's Knox Box. The keys being provided are intended to be a secondary or back up mechanism for controlling the building systems.
3. Company officers should review the Montgomery County Knox Box Access Regulation with their shifts:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DPS/Resources/Files/FPCC/knoxletter.pdf>

4. Review the MBT on Elevator Fireman Service

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/resources/files/swsj/operations/mbt/19-02_fire_service_elevator_orientation.pdf

and the accompanying video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-0hfM_0JpY

5. Review the Challenges in the Streets on Fire Alarm Systems

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lurNuczzyMg>

End State:

If you have any questions, please contact Captain Dustin Poist @ 240-777-2298 OR the Small Tools Section via email FRS.SmallTools@montgomerycountymd.gov or (240)777-2217.