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Page 1 of 2

FIRE DEPARTMENT KEY BOXES**ISSUE:**

Sentence 2.5.1.3.(1) of the Alberta Fire Code 1997 (AFC) requires fire department key boxes in buildings. The keys are for use by fire department members in an emergency.

BACKGROUND:

The requirement for key boxes was expanded from the Alberta Fire Code 1992, Article 2.8.1.3., to reduce the need for large numbers of keys and special devices to be carried on fire department apparatus.

CODE REQUIREMENTS:

Sentences (1) and (2) of Article 2.5.1.3. state:

2.5.1.3. Fire Department Key Box

- 1) A fire department key box constructed, keyed, and located in a manner acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction shall be provided in a building, and shall contain a set or sets of keys or devices required to be used in an emergency.
- 2) A fire department key box shall be installed and provided with keys and devices in conformance with Sentence (1) in a building equipped with
 - a) a fire alarm system where control features, including those for emergency voice communication systems, are located behind a locked panel,
 - b) a fire alarm system where manually operated devices require a key or device in order to be reset,
 - c) a fire alarm system where the electrical circuit breaker is located within a locked panel or room,
 - d) an automatic sprinkler system where the main control valve is locked in the open position,

ISSUE OF THIS INTERPRETATION IS
AUTHORIZED UNDER ARTICLE 1.1.2.5. OF THE
ALBERTA FIRE CODE 1997 BY THE
ADMINISTRATOR.



C.M. TYE



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- e) an automatic sprinkler system where the main control valve is located within a locked room or enclosure,
- f) fire fighting standpipe and water supply connections in a locked room or area such as on a roof,
- g) a key operated elevator control feature that will permit exclusive use of elevators to fire fighting personnel only,
- h) a key operated elevator control feature that will switch selected elevators to operate on emergency power,
- i) stairway doors that have been locked on the stairway side in conformance with the Alberta Building Code, or
- j) locked access doors to a roof provided for fire fighting purposes.

PROPOSED ALBERTA FIRE CODE:

The following has been accepted for inclusion in the next edition of the Alberta Fire Code:

2.5.1.3. Fire Department Key Box

1) Buildings that incorporate fire protection equipment, elevator control or door access outlined in Sentence (2) shall provide a key box constructed, keyed, and located in a manner acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction containing a set or sets of keys or devices required to be used in an emergency. (See Appendix A)

A-2.5.1.3.(1) The authority having jurisdiction may accept alternatives to the installation of a key box at buildings containing fire protection equipment, elevator control, or door access, as outlined in Sentence 2.5.1.3.(2), where measures have been taken to provide entry to the building on a 24 h basis. Buildings that have on-site security personnel, on-site staff, or alternative access provisions acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction meet the requirements of this Sentence.

INTERPRETATION:

It is not the intent of Sentence 2.5.1.2.(1) of the Alberta Fire Code 1997 to require all buildings to be provided with a fire department key box. A key box is only required for buildings that contain fire protection equipment, elevator control or door access outlined in the requirements of Sentence 2.5.1.3.(2).

In addition buildings that provide alternatives as outlined in the proposed Appendix A reference that are acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction are not required to install fire department key boxes.