



Montgomery County Fire Marshal's Office

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Montgomery County Gate Access Program

Purpose

To provide rapid emergency access to property protected with gates, without damaging access gate equipment.

Gates – General

1. Approval by the Montgomery County Fire Marshal's Office of gate plans is **required prior to** construction or installation of an access gate for a multifamily residential property or gated subdivision. Under the Montgomery County Fire Code new building projects protected by security gates will be required to submit gate plans under the program to maintain emergency access. Existing gates in multi-family residential complexes and gated communities must be equipped as well with the required access device under this program.
2. Gates may be of the sliding, swinging, or cross-arm types.
3. Clearance - When the gate is open, there cannot be any overhead cross-arms, braces or other structures. It shall provide an overhead clearance of at least **14** feet. When open, gates shall provide a clear width of not less than **14** feet. Although the minimum clearance width of the gate is **14** feet, the overall minimum width of the entire emergency access way shall not be less than **20** feet. .

Electric Operated Gates:

The electric gate access feature shall require one of the following options:

1. A County Gate Knox Key switch incorporated into the gate or lockbox on all new installations
2. Existing gates with an existing lock box may equip with a County Gate Knox padlock
(see the specifications on the next page).
3. The gate shall default to an open position and remain open in the event of power failure or;
4. A manual gate release shall be provided and accessible for emergency use.
5. All gates, when made active, shall move from completely closed to fully open, taking no more than 15 seconds. Once the gate is activated via the lock box, the gate shall remain open for 5 minutes minimum.
6. All electrical devices shall be UL listed.

7. All exit gates shall open when a vehicle is prepared to exit the area without the use of a key, card or special knowledge.

Option # 1 (All new installations)– Install Knox 3501 or 3502 Key Switch

1. Install a County Gate Knox key switch at or near the gate access keypad
2. Activation of the key switch operates the gate as required

Option #2 - Lock Box with padlock – existing only with prior approval by MCFMO

1. An existing box with padlock capability may employ a County Knox padlock.
2. The color of the box shall be red with "FIRE DEPT" or "911" painted on the door.
3. The entry gate is to remain open while the lock box door is open.
4. The lock box must be located on the gate in such a manner that is easily located but protected from vehicular damage.

Chain Drop Systems

Chain drop systems may not be used as the primary access system on electric gates. The primary access system should be located at or near the keypad or entry station, and when activated, it should open the gate using the electric operating system.

Chain drop systems can be used to provide a secondary mechanical release in the event of power failure, thus eliminating the need for battery backup. In an effort to avoid confusion, the chain drop box should not be mounted next to the electric emergency access switch or box.

Plan Submission, Purchase and Installation of Knox Access Equipment

A gate plan (8 ½ X 11) should be submitted to the MCFMO and approved before installation. After submitting gate plans, and receiving authorization, purchase and install the equipment. Any gate contractor may perform the installation.

MCFMO has adopted the E-Approval system with Knoxbox for ordering your locks or key switches. You can access those pages directly at:

To order a padlock for a manual gate system - http://www.knoxbox.com/store/Store.cfm?conf_eapp=1

To order a Key Switch for an electric gate - <http://www.knoxbox.com/store/Knox-Key-Switches.cfm>

Contact the MCFMO for inspection and securing of the finished installation.

For Further Information, contact Gate Program Coordinator Jennifer Janes at MCFMO.

(936) 538-8288 or Jennifer.janes@mctx.org