



Frontline

Westerville Division of Fire Newsletter

Quarter 2 2016

- Station 111
400 W. Main Street
- Station 112
727 E. Schrock Road
- Station 113
355 N. Spring Road
- Emergencies
9-1-1
- Non-emergencies
(614) 882-2213

Knox Box® is Key to Avoiding Damaged Doors

Have you ever considered how first responders would enter your home in the event of fire or an emergency while you or others were away or unable to reach the door? During a real emergency, firefighters, medics, police officers or other responders will likely knock down the door with a battering ram to gain entry. The result, of course, would be a battered and broken door(s) that would eventually require replacement.

The Westerville Division of Fire wants you to know about a product that could minimize or eliminate the need for the forced entry in the event of a true emergency. The product, called a Knox Box®,* is designed to reduce response time and property damage and liability.

Knox Box® key boxes are mounted near building entrances and homes, with a key registered with the local public safety agency. In the event of a fire or medical emergency, WFD first responders would first access the key box before forcing entry to the home.

WFD Chief Brian Miller says it's a resource that would help the department shave precious seconds off its four-

minute response time if and when needed.

"We're in the process of developing a registration protocol for homes that want to utilize these key boxes," said Miller. "These systems are safe because only the department would have information to the access system. Still, homeowners need to assess the risks and determine if there may be a scenario, particularly medical, where we can prevent a forced entry to get to a patient. Otherwise, our residents can view it as another option for added peace of mind."



*Photo source: www.knoxbox.com
Example residential keybox units for demonstration purposes.*

Commercial users can store floor plans and keycodes in the box, aiding firefighters or medics responding to a multi-floor emergency. Businesses should contact WFD to order and register. Residential users may order from the website. The Knox Box® starts at about \$160. They are available for order through the website www.knoxhomebox.com. Westerville residents should enter their zip code and "Westerville Division of Fire" as their service agency.

**Knox Box is a commercial product and may not be the sole product on the market in its category. Residents are encouraged to do their own research to determine what product may be most suitable for their home. The Westerville Division of Fire does not formally endorse commercial products, including Knox Box, its affiliates or related companies. Further, WFD does not receive any benefits through the mention or promotion of this product.*

Lessons Learned: National Fire Academy



Fire Chief Brian Miller

Be Prepared! These are words I've heard throughout my life. They have stayed with me as I move through my career as Fire Chief for the Westerville Division of Fire. I recently had the privilege to attend the National Fire Academy in Maryland. While there, I had the opportunity to focus on disaster preparedness, specifically natural disasters. With this training, I consider the disasters we analyzed in a class setting to emergencies we may need to respond to locally.

I feel confident that WFD and the City as a whole have taken the steps necessary to prepare for disaster response; from building collapse to hazardous material spills or management. We have worked to maintain and create backups for our infrastructure to mitigate a crisis and get life back to normal as quickly as possible. (MORE, BACK).

CHIEF'S COLUMN, CONTINUED...

WFD and other City first responders, including the Westerville Division of Police, Westerville Electric Division and Public Service Department, have performed well in the past when responding to weather emergencies. Remember the 2012 derecho that left many residents with downed trees and citywide power outages? Due to planning and each department working closely together, Westerville was able to manage the situation quickly, keep the community safe and restore power quickly.

Our firefighters are always prepared. They regularly participate in training for disasters with a regional Urban Search and Rescue Team that can handle building search and triage in the event of a natural disaster, such as a tornado. Firefighters also train on hazardous material response and mitigation, utilizing the same regional response team approach.

The City of Westerville also works within the National Incident Management System (NIMS) framework when it comes to disaster management standards and guidelines. With this proficiency, the City can gain assistance with funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) if necessary.

In the event of a large-scale disaster, you can do your part by helping us help you. Maintain a personal disaster kit in your home to start. In a large-scale disaster scenario, there may be a delay in emergency responders getting to areas that have suffered the most damage. You can prepare by visiting www.ready.gov/build-a-kit. There's also a role for businesses. Visit www.ready.gov/planning.

I came home with many ideas to build upon our already strong foundation for disaster response from The National Fire Academy, both in Westerville and Blendon Township. Unfortunately, our world today requires that we be prepared for a variety of events, both natural and human-made.

Please feel free to contact the Westerville Division of Fire at (614) 901-6600 to learn more about preparing your family or business to be resilient in the face of disaster.

Division NEWS



The Westerville Division of Fire has received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® EMS Silver Award for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks.

Agencies that receive the Mission: Lifeline Silver award have demonstrated at least 75 percent compliance for each required achievement measure for one year.

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), EMS providers are vital to the success of Mission: Lifeline. EMS agencies perform 12-lead ECGs which measure the electrical activity of the heart and can help determine if a heart attack has occurred. They also follow protocols derived from AHA/American College of Cardiology guidelines, designed to rapidly identify suspected heart attack patients, promptly notify the medical center, and trigger an early response from the awaiting hospital personnel.



Thank you, Westerville!

Last March, Westerville voters had a say in the future of their fire and emergency medical services (EMS), approving a 2.8 mill levy to address the Westerville Fire Division's (WFD) operating and capital needs for at least the next six years. ***Thank you for your commitment to helping WFD meet the demands of the changing face of the fire service.***



This funding allows WFD to maintain the service levels Westerville residents have come to know and expect.

- **Maintain rapid response.** In 2015, emergency response averaged just seconds over four minutes (2015).
- **Meet service demands of increased EMS calls.** In Westerville and Blendon Township, calls grew 12% between 2008 and 2014. In 2015 alone, calls rose another 7%, marking an eight-year high.
- **Meet increased demand for fire inspection services.** In 2015, WFD again conducted nearly 2,500 commercial building inspections, a number we expect to continually rise as new businesses enter the community.
- **Enhance disaster planning, preparation and training to meet resident feedback** (2014 Community Survey).
- **Address aged equipment and facilities.** WFD will make critical replacements of some equipment in poor condition and begin needed repairs on some facilities.

