



COLORADO SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT
Division of the Fire Marshal
Administrative Ruling



Number:	2024-2		
Subject:	Knox Override Switches Used for Building/Site Access		
Reference:	2021 International Fire Code, 506.1, As Amended		
Effective Date:	07/05/2024	Issued By:	Steve Smith, FPE-II
Revision Date:		Revised By:	
Approval Date:	07/05/2024	Approved By:	Brett Lacey, Fire Marshal

PURPOSE: To clarify methods and devices used to allow firefighters access to secured buildings.

SCOPE: This ruling retroactively applies to all buildings that are secured with electronic access control systems to include: electric locking hardware, electromagnetic locking devices, electrified fences, or other devices that restrict access to or within a building.

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE: Recently there has been an increase in the amount of restricted access doors into a building utilizing access control systems with electronic or electromagnetic locking devices as well as site perimeter fencing being secured with electricity. The electronic locking devices pose difficulty and delay for firefighters in gaining access into a building during an emergency. Electrified fences pose a safety risk to firefighters as well as also causing delays in accessing the site and building. There have also been issues of card readers used for door access where the cards provided for fire department access no longer work.

DECISION: To allow firefighters faster access into secured areas, a Knox override switch shall be used to either directly deenergize electromagnetic locks and electrified fences, or interface to the access control system to release electronic locking hardware as needed for unimpeded firefighter access to the space or area. Where magnetic locks have battery backup, the override switch must be installed where it will interrupt power to the lock. The Knox override switches shall be installed per the “Rapid Entry System” informational document published by the Division of the Fire Marshal.