

Sprinkler: Installing Knox® Locking Caps Ensures Safety

As a fire safety professional, one of the first things you probably notice as you drive up to a building is the FDC sign. Next time you service a building, take a closer look. Is the cap missing? A missing cap means the FDC could contain debris, restricting water flow for the firefighters. From a safety standpoint, the FDC needs to remain securely capped until the fire department arrives. Here is how you can help.

A building protected with a fire sprinkler system will have a fire department connection (FDC) for fire department use only. These connections are required to be protected with caps. But a simple cap (threaded or quick connect) is not going to prevent a vandal from removing the cap and exposing the open connection to the entrance of debris. Debris and other unwanted items will need to be removed by firefighters prior to use. But often, these materials get lodged and are not easily removed or cannot be removed at all. This impedes fire department operations, putting firefighters and people in danger. The only method for keeping debris out is to replace traditional caps with approved locking caps.

Install Knox Locking Caps for Safety

The solution is to replace conventional FDC caps with Knox Locking Caps, where only the fire department can access the connection. Only a locking cap will ensure that the connections are clear, safe, and ready for use by the fire department.

FDCs can be either threaded or have a “Storz” quick connection. Storz connections have interlocking hooks and flanges instead of threads and are bigger for large volumes of water. Both threaded and Storz FDCs are required by NFPA to have caps. Also, both types of FDCs (threaded and Storz) are available with Knox Locking Caps.

Pre-Approved Knox Jurisdictions

Hose-connections for fire departments require caps (NFPA 13, 16.12.3.2). Where this rule is not being enforced, there will be open-ended pipes, (a code violation). But many cities and towns have adopted the Knox System, which allows traditional caps to be replaced with Knox Locking Caps that can be locked in place. For these jurisdictions, firefighters will have the Knox Keywrench, so only the fire department has access. City administrators, fire departments, and building owners endorse the Knox System.

To improve safety, fire departments in many cities and towns allow the installation of the Knox Locking Caps, which are pre-approved for use in over 550 jurisdictions in the United States. [Here is a link to the list of Approved Jurisdictions.](#)

Requesting Fire Department Approval for Knox Locking Caps

If you service buildings in a city or town where Knox Locking Caps are not pre-approved for installation, provide the name and contact information of your local fire department to your Brooks account manager. They will coordinate with a Knox representative who will work with your local fire department on getting Knox Locking Caps approved.



To install a Knox Locking Cap, all you will need is the Knox Keywrench installation tool, which is the same tool that the fire department has to remove the cap. [Watch our video on FDC locking caps.](#)

Wherever Knox Locking Caps are approved and installed, the safety of occupants, firefighters, and property is enhanced. Installing a new Knox Locking Cap takes only minutes, as they are designed to fit existing connections. Your customers will appreciate the improvement in safety, as your fire department can easily remove these caps and have immediate access to any building hose connection upon arrival.

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800.826.3473 (P) • 800.433.9265 (F) • sales@BrooksEquipment.com • BrooksEquipment.com