



# Houston Fire Department Life Safety Bureau (LSB)



## LSB Standard No. 06, Rev. 05

### Fire Depository Boxes

*Supersedes: LSB Standard No. 06, Rev. 04, 05/01/2012*

**Effective Date: xx/xx/xx**



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LSB Standards are established in accordance with provisions of the City of Houston *Fire Code*. They are subject to the administrative sections covering alternative materials and methods, modifications, and the Board of Appeals.

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# Fire Depository Boxes

## Section 6.1 – General

### 6.1.1 Scope.

This standard provides a method of furnishing current, valid property information and means of emergency access for fire department personnel in all high-rise occupancies and other facilities as may be required by the Fire Marshal, as called for in the *Fire Code* or this standard.

### 6.1.2 Purpose.

The purpose shall be to provide clarification of requirements and guidance to persons charged with providing and maintaining the Fire Depository Box in high-rise buildings, as prescribed by the *Fire Code* and this standard, in a state of operational readiness and reliability.

This standard is subject to periodic review and update to accommodate changes in local need or requirements, changes in nationally recognized standards, changes in related technology, or changes required by state or federal regulations.

**Notice:** Where references in this standard are made to products manufactured by “Falcon Locks” and related “9-1-1” Boxes, certain products manufactured by the “Knox Company” have been approved for voluntary use in lieu of “Falcon Lock” products and the “9-1-1” boxes. All key boxes shall comply with UL 1037.

Approved items manufactured by the “Knox Company” may be referenced online at [www.knoxbox.com](http://www.knoxbox.com).

The following is a list of “Knox Company” products that are allowed to be used inside the City of Houston city limits.

- Fire Depository Box
- Electrical Shutdown Box
- Keyswitch
- Padlock
- FDC 2½” Locking Cap
- SecureCap
- Cabinets (1300 Series)
- 3200 Series Box, Single-Key Style, ONLY with the hinged lid.
- 4100 Series Box

The Fire Marshal’s final approval and a permit are required for the installation and use of any “Knox Company” or “Falcon Lock” product.

## **Section 6.2 – Definitions**

### **6.2.1 Fire Depository Box (FDB).**

An approved metal protective box, container, or cabinet that contains the information manuals, packets, and keys as required by this standard. Boxes shall be painted any color approved by the Fire Marshal; provided that the door of the box shall be painted bright red so as to be readily noticeable and have the words “**FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX**” in white permanent letters not less than 1 inch in height.

### **6.2.2 Key Box.**

A tamper proof protective container or box operable by an approved fire department key or other approved means that contains fire department emergency access keys required by this standard. See LSB Standard No. 05, “Key Boxes”.

### **6.2.3 High-Rise Building.**

Any building having occupied floors located more than 75 feet above grade plane.

### **6.2.4 High-Rise Survey Forms.**

Survey forms (HFD Form 27) that have been compiled by the HFD Operations Division, to provide a variety of fire and life-safety information about a building, its contents, and its fire protection systems that are necessary for use by the fire department in the event of an emergency within that building.

### **6.2.5 Mobility Impaired List.**

A list, by name, impairment, and work location, of persons who may have some type of physical condition or hindrance that could encumber their self-evacuation from the floor of incident or the building in the event of an emergency or would need assistance of other personnel or an emergency service in the event of an emergency. Names of persons with a short-term illness or injury need not be placed on this list. Fire Wardens and building security personnel should, however, be knowledgeable of any person who may be in need of assistance in evacuating during an emergency.

## **Section 6.3 – General Requirements**

### **6.3.1 General Contents of Fire Depository Box (FDB).**

The FDB shall contain only the following approved items and information:

1. Loose-leaf binder containing required information sheets.
2. Building access keys, accompanied by one “**HIGH-RISE FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX KEY TAGS**” Legend Card, described in Section 6.3.3.1 of this standard.
3. Elevator door hoistway keys/tools.
4. Copy of the “Key Box/Fire Depository Box” permit (if not posted outside the FDB).

### 6.3.2 Binder Information Sheets.

The loose-leaf binder shall be tabbed and indexed and contain the following completed information sheets:

1. High-Rise Survey Forms: At least **5 copies of the entire set** of completed forms (HFD Form 27, Rev. 03/2002) for the building.
2. Supplemental Information Sheet: See Section 6.3.7.
3. Mobility Impaired List: The most current dated Mobility Impaired List. If NO mobility impaired persons are employed within the building, the responsible party shall provide a sheet of paper stating, "NO MOBILITY IMPAIRED – AS OF THIS DATE", and date the form. The dated Mobility Impaired List shall be reviewed, verified, and updated at least **every 6 months**.
4. Elevator Operating Instructions: Detailed written instructions for elevator use should include firefighter elevator recall, cab use, and any other special details for elevator operations. (Instructions for elevator use should be obtained from the building's elevator service company.) See Appendix B, "Instructions for Elevator Operations".
5. Elevator Diagram: A side view diagram of all building elevator shafts showing floors served by each elevator bank, any transfer floors, shuttle elevators, or private elevators. (Where possible, show any dumb-waiter, mail cart, or similar shaft-ways.) See Appendix A for examples.
6. List of Emergency Contact Names and Phone Numbers: Property manager, building engineers, and security company.
7. Standardized Floor Plans: See Section 6.3.6.

### 6.3.3 Building Emergency Access Keys, Elevator Switch Keys, and Legend Card.

#### 6.3.3.1 Legend Card.

A "**HIGH-RISE FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX KEY TAGS**" Legend Card, specific to that building, shall be provided and maintained in the FDB. The Legend Card shall be laminated, letter size (8 inches × 11 inches) or larger, and printed in lettering with a font size of at least 18 point that is readily legible and shall describe all the required keys and their functions and the respective key tag colors. See Appendix C for Legend Card Information.

#### 6.3.3.2 Key Sets.

A minimum of **5 sets** of individually detachable keys shall be provided and maintained in the FDB. The key sets shall be assembled and tagged as indicated below:

Key tags shall be a rigid, plastic laminate material in the colors indicated, imprinted with block lettering at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in height so that it is readily legible. See Appendix C for examples of key set arrangements and tag colors. The following keys shall be provided as part of each of the **5 sets**.

**A. Building Emergency Access Keys** – Keys for accessing all exit stairs, mechanical and electrical rooms and spaces, roof access doors or hatches, standpipe and sprinkler system control valves, and special hazard areas. The title for each bullet point that appears within quotation marks below depicts the lettering that shall be on the key tags discussed therein.

- **“STAIRWAY ACCESS”**: Keys required to access all locked building exit stair doors shall have WHITE key tags. All building exit stairway door locks shall be keyed to the same emergency access key.
- **“MECHANICAL ROOMS,” “ELECTRICAL ROOMS,” and “ELEVATOR EQUIPMENT ROOMS”**: Keys required to access all building elevator equipment rooms, air handler (HVAC) mechanical rooms or spaces, and electrical panel rooms or spaces shall have WHITE key tags.

**Exception:** Main building electrical service vault rooms require special keys that ONLY the electrical power service provider will possess, due to extreme electrical hazards and dangerous nature of equipment within the vaults.

- **“BUILDING ROOF ACCESS”**: Keys required for roof access (if not on the building key system) shall have WHITE tags that identify which stairways provide roof access.
- **“SPRINKLER/STANDPIPE CONTROL VALVES”**: Keys required for sprinkler and standpipe control valve operation. All locking devices on control valves shall be keyed to the same key that will unlock all sprinkler and standpipe control valves. Control valve keys shall have BLUE tags.
- **Additional Special Keys**: Where special keys are needed to access any special process or hazard areas or rooms in the building, such as “Flammable Liquids” storage rooms, “Hazardous Materials” storage rooms, large file storage rooms, special equipment spaces, etc., appropriate keys shall be provided, properly labeled to identify the specific floor/room location and nature, on WHITE tags. Notation of all special keys shall also be included on the Supplemental Information Sheet in the FDB binder.

**B. Elevator Switch Keys** – There shall be elevator switch keys provided for Emergency Fire Service (Phase 1) Recall (labeled “Fire Service Phase 1”) and for Emergency Fire Service (Phase 2) Firefighter Elevator Car Operation (labeled “Fire Service Phase 2”).

- When one elevator switch key actuates both elevator recall and car operation functions, it shall be labeled with a RED tag as, “Fire Service Phase 1 & Phase 2.”

**C. Additional Elevator Car Keys** – When applicable, the following keys shall also be provided and labeled as indicated:

- “**Elevator Car Access Panel**” keys on ORANGE tags.
- “**Elevator Emergency Stop/Run**” keys on ORANGE tags. When “Elevator Emergency Stop/Run” keys are provided, the “Elevator Emergency Stop/Run” key should be individually detachable so that the key may be used in conjunction with the “Elevator Fire Service Phase 2” key in the event of an elevator malfunction to immediately activate the **emergency stop** should the elevator operate incorrectly.
- “**Elevator Inspection On/Off**” keys on YELLOW tags. Where no “Elevator Emergency Stop/Run” switches are provided in the elevator cars, “Emergency Inspection On/Off” switches shall be used as a substitute in an emergency.

#### **6.3.4 Elevator Hoistway Door Keys/Tools.**

Where applicable, a minimum of 2 appropriate elevator hoistway door keys/tools for all elevators in the building shall be provided for fire department use in elevator entrapments. (Multiple types of “Elevator Hoistway Door” keys/tools may be required where different elevator systems exist within a building; each key/tool shall be labeled with WHITE tags, imprinted with block lettering at least ¼ inch in height, and shall identify the type of key and the appropriate elevator locations.)

#### **6.3.5 Independent Service Keys.**

“Independent Service” keys shall NOT be placed in the Fire Depository Box. A minimum of 2 “Independent Service” keys (labeled with BLACK tags) shall be made readily available to the fire department for use during medical emergencies and/or elevator entrapment rescues. The key tags shall be of plastic laminate materials in the color indicated and imprinted with block lettering at least ¼ inch in height, so that the lettering is readily legible and shall identify the type of key.

Where 24-hour on-site building security is provided, “Independent Service” keys may be kept secured at the security console and be readily available for fire department use upon request. Buildings without 24-hour on-site security shall provide a separate key box near the Fire Depository Box location, with the box labeled “EMS Elevator Keys”. The EMS Elevator Key box shall be mounted and secured in a manner similar to the FDB.

**Note:** Where elevator “Independent Service” key switches are located behind elevator car access panels, “Elevator Car Access Panel” keys on ORANGE tags (key tags shall be a rigid plastic laminate material in the colors indicated and imprinted with block lettering at least ¼ inch in height, so that the lettering is readily legible, and shall identify the type of key) shall be provided on a key ring along with each “Independent Service” key.

#### **6.3.6 Standardized Floor Plans.**

A minimum of **3 sets** of standardized floor plans shall be provided to HFD, unless more are deemed necessary by the Fire Marshal. All floor plans shall include the following information for each floor and/or level when applicable:

- Fire Command or Central Control Room



- Fire Depository Box
- Fire Alarm Annunciator Panel
- Public-Address System Panel
- Enclosed Stairways
- Stairwell Identification
- Tenant Stairs/Escalators
- Two-Way Communication Means
- Fire Hose Valve Connections and Cabinets
- Elevator Lobbies
- Elevator Fire Service Recall Location
- Mechanical, Electrical Service, and Air Handler Rooms
- Sprinkler Control Valves
- Fire Extinguishing Systems
- Computer Telecom Rooms with Special Extinguishing Systems
- UPS Battery Rooms
- Pre-Action Protected Areas and Location of Control Valves
- Other Emergency Control or Indicating Systems
- Gas Service Main Shut-off Location
- Smoke Removal Controls
- Emergency Generator

### **6.3.7 Supplemental Information Sheet.**

The building owner or owners' authorized agent shall provide the following supplemental information to the HFD: following supplemental information shall be provided to HFD:

#### **6.3.7.1 Significant Building Information.**

A list of hazards, precautions or other important information peculiar to each building on site shall be provided to HFD by the building owner or owners' authorized agent in bullet format. (Examples include but are not be limited to: presence of shunt trips, lack of emergency generator, lack of direct roof access from stairways, hazardous materials/flammable liquid storage locations, etc.)

#### **6.3.7.2 Pertinent Building Information.**

Information pertinent to the High-Rise Survey Form (HFD Form 27, Rev. 03/2002), but not contained within the High-Rise Survey Form, or where more narrative information may be needed.

##### **A. Building Information**

- Whether sprinkler system(s) is supplied by the building's standpipe riser.
- Number of stairs: pressurized or non-pressurized.
- Exit stairway discharge locations.
- Location of exit points to public way.
- Evacuee meeting location(s).
- Building construction type (steel, concrete, etc.).

## **B. Elevator Information**

- Whether elevators equipped with “shunt trips.”
- Whether there are sprinklers in elevator machine rooms.
- Whether there are sprinklers in elevator hoistways.
- Alternate recall floors identified.

## **C. Standpipe System Information**

- Working pressure on systems with Pressure Reducing Valves (PRV) on fire hose connections.
- Whether Fire Department Connections (FDC) supply individual standpipe risers.

## **Section 6.4 – Location of Fire Depository Box (FDB)**

### **6.4.1 Fire Depository Box Placement.**

The FDB shall be located within the building’s *Fire Command Center, Central Control Station, or Emergency Control Center* in buildings that have such dedicated rooms. In buildings that lack such a Center or Station, the FDB shall be located adjacent to the main fire alarm panel, where it can be readily identified and accessed.

### **6.4.2 Locks on FDB.**

Locks must be the type approved for use on a “9-1-1” box (openable with a special fire department key).

### **6.4.3 Double Locking Boxes.**

Double Locking FDB’s shall use an approved “Falcon Lock” as one of the locking devices and a separate padlock as the other locking device, to facilitate the property personnel’s access to the box to update information and/or replace keys as needed.

## **Section 6.5 – Key Box/Fire Depository Box Permit**

### **6.5.1 Permit Required.**

A fire department “Key Box/Fire Depository Box” permit is required to install and maintain Key Box/Fire Depository Box. This permit shall be renewed annually, and a copy of the permit shall be posted in or near the FDB.

#### **Permit Office contact information is as follows:**

The Houston Permitting Center

1002 Washington Avenue

Houston, Texas 77002

Hours of operation: 8:00am to 3:30pm (CST)

Monday through Friday

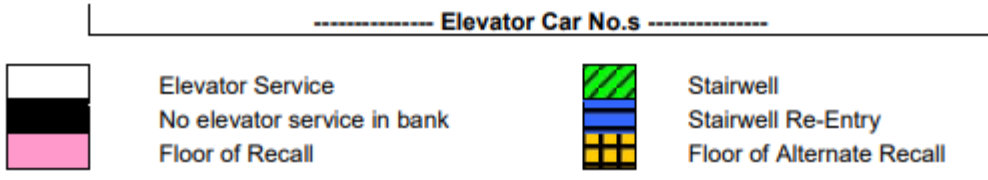
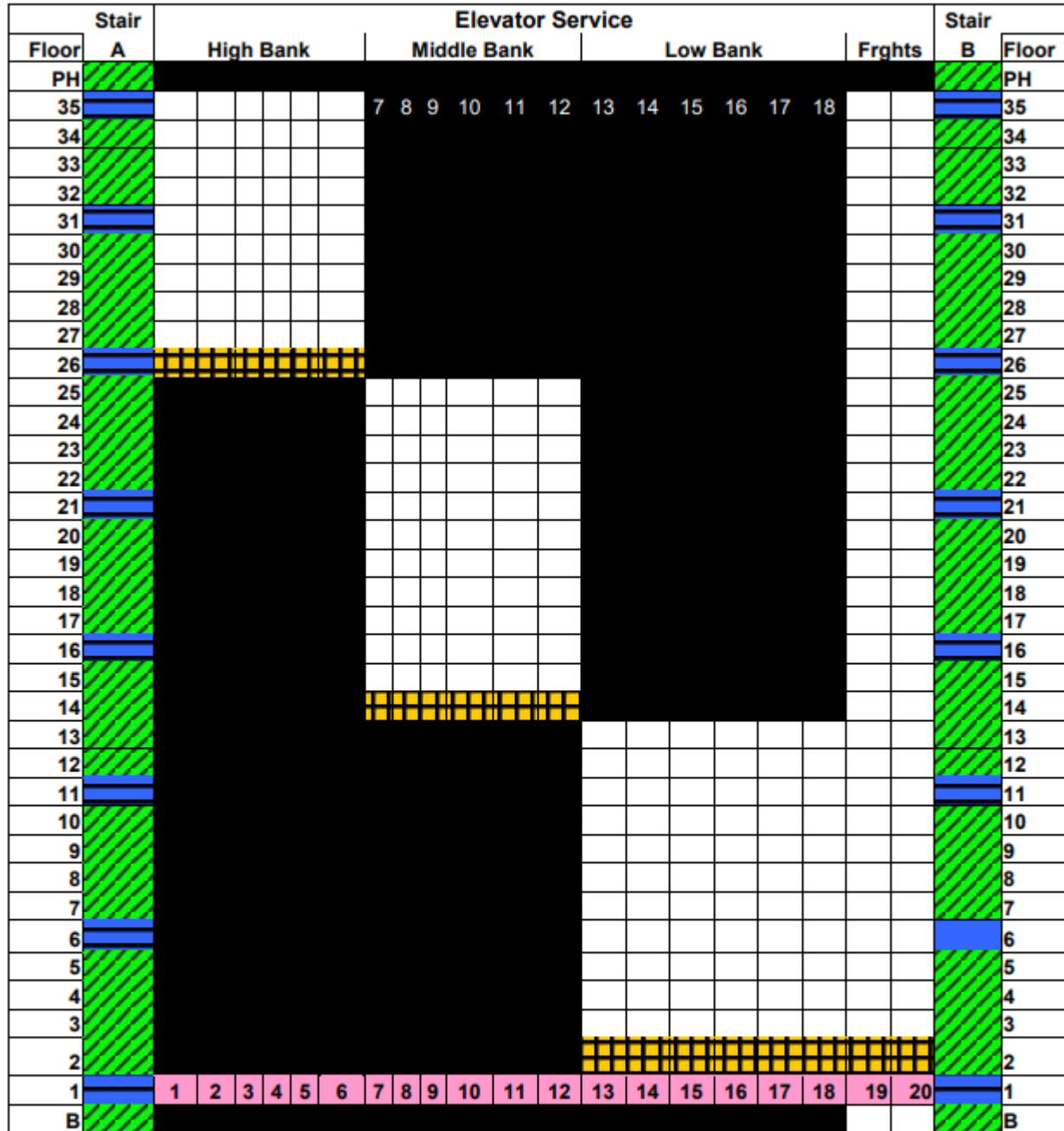
Office phone: (832) 394-8811

To E-mail Customer Service Questions: [hfd.permitoffice@houstontx.gov](mailto:hfd.permitoffice@houstontx.gov)

Link to City Wide Fee Schedule: [www.houstoncityfees.org](http://www.houstoncityfees.org)

# Appendix A – Elevator Riser Diagrams

## Example No. 1 – Elevator Riser Diagram: Generic Elevator and Stairwell Diagram



**Example No. 2 – Elevator Riser Diagram: Elevator and Stairwell Diagram**

		Elevator					
Floor Level	Stair A	Freight Elevator Car: 13	High Bank Elevator	Mid-Bank Elevator Cars: 4-8	Low Bank Elevator Cars: 8-12	Stair B	Floor Level
24	Reentry			XXXXXX	XXXXXX	Reentry	24
23				XXXXXX	XXXXXX		23
22				XXXXXX	XXXXXX		22
21				XXXXXX	XXXXXX		21
20	Reentry			XXXXXX	XXXXXX	Reentry	20
19				XXXXXX	XXXXXX		19
18				XXXXXX	XXXXXX		18
17			Alt. Recall	XXXXXX	XXXXXX		17
16			XXXXXX		XXXXXX		16
15	Reentry		XXXXXX		XXXXXX	Reentry	15
14			XXXXXX		XXXXXX		14
13			XXXXXX		XXXXXX		13
12			XXXXXX		XXXXXX		12
11			XXXXXX		XXXXXX		11
10	Reentry		XXXXXX		XXXXXX	Reentry	10
9			XXXXXX	Alt. Recall	XXXXXX		9
8			XXXXXX	XXXXXX			8
7			XXXXXX	XXXXXX			7
6			XXXXXX	XXXXXX			6
5	Reentry		XXXXXX	XXXXXX		Reentry	5
4			XXXXXX	XXXXXX			4
3			XXXXXX	XXXXXX			3
2		Alt. Recall	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	Alt. Recall		2
1	Reentry	Recall	Recall	Recall	Recall	Reentry	1
B	Reentry		XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	Reentry	B

Elevator Service	
No Elevator Service	XXXXXX
Primary Recall Floor	Recall
Alternate Recall Floor	Alt. Recall
Re-entry Floor	Reentry

## Appendix B – Instruction for Elevator Operation

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELEVATOR OPERATION

ELEVATOR MACHINE RM. SPRINKLED:	_____	_____	
	yes	no	
ELEVATOR SHAFTS SPRINKLED:	_____	_____	
	yes	no	
SHUNT TRIPS:	_____	_____	
	yes	no	
PHASE 1 ELEVATOR RECALL	_____	_____	_____
	auto	manual	both
PRIMARY RECALL FLOOR (Designated Landing)	_____		
ALTERNATE RECALL FLOOR (Alternate Landing)	_____		

**To recall elevators:** Specify manual recall procedure. \*If doors close after being recalled, specify how to re-open and how long they remain open.

**To operate car:** \*\*Specify if Fire Service (Phase 2) key must be turned to “on” to operate elevators. Specify if different keys are used for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

**To travel to desired floor:** Explain how to travel to the desired floor. Specify if the first step of this action requires the doors to be open or closed.

**To close door:** Specify how to close doors completely to remain closed.

**To open door:** Specify how to open doors completely to remain open.

**To hold car at floor:** Specify how to retain the car at desired floor. Can keys be removed?

**To cancel floor selection:** Specify how to cancel the floor selected and/or choose another floor.

**To return car to designated or alternate landing:** Specify how to return the car to the recall floor. Specify if the key can be removed. Specify if a firefighter or other person must accompany the car to the recall floor.

### PROVIDE INSTRUCTION FOR EACH (DIFFERENT) BANK OF ELEVATORS THAT MAY OPERATE INDEPENDENTLY FROM ANOTHER.

\* Buildings constructed under Houston’s high-rise code between 1979 and 1997 may have elevator doors that open for a predetermined time and then close.

\*\* The ASME A17.1 (1984 edition) requires an ON-OFF-HOLD position switch in elevator cars. Switches that have a BYPASS position must be changed, because the BYPASS position was disallowed beginning in 1976.

## Appendix C – Key Sets with Identification Tags

There shall be **5** separate “quick release” key holders as pictured below, with keys as described below, for a total of **5 sets** of keys all appropriately labeled, provided and maintained in the Fire Depository Box.



### C-1 Key Set Arrangements.

A total of **5 sets** of building emergency access keys as described below shall be provided for fire department use in the FDB of all high-rise buildings:

1. Each key shall have a 7/8-inch (13 mm) split key ring through it, attaching the key to the appropriate colored plastic laminate identification tag.
2. A “quick release” key holder with one button operation that has 1-inch (25 mm) split rings on each end shall be used.
  - a. At one end of this “quick release” key holder, a 2-inch (50 mm) split ring will be attached to the 1-inch (25 mm) split ring that has the following building access keys:
    - i. Stairway key & WHITE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
    - ii. Roof access key & WHITE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.

- iii. Mechanical/Electrical room key & WHITE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - iv. Elevator equipment room key & WHITE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - v. All special access keys & WHITE tags – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - vi. Sprinkler/Standpipe key & BLUE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
- b. The other end of this “quick release” holder will have attached to the 1-inch (25 mm) split ring another 2-inch (50 mm) split ring with the following keys. On this 2-inch (50 mm) split ring shall be attached only the following elevator keys (if applicable to that specific building) with corresponding plastic laminated colored I.D. tags:
- i. Fire Service – Phase 1 and Phase 2 – RED tags – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - ii. Elevator Car Door – RED tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - iii. Elevator Inspection On/Off – YELLOW tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - iv. Elevator Stop/Run – ORANGE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - v. Elevator Car Access Panel – ORANGE tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.
  - vi. Elevator Car Emergency Power Selector – GREEN tag – on a 7/8<sup>th</sup> inch (13 mm) split ring.

Scale: 7/8 inch = approximately 13 mm; 1 inch = approximately 25 mm.

**Note:** “Independent Service” keys (pictured for labeling purposes only) shall NOT be attached to any of the above key sets, NOR shall these keys be kept in the Fire Depository Box. “Independent Service” keys shall be kept in a secured location or separate key box. See Section 6.3.5.

## **C-2 Key Tag Legend Card.**

Laminated letter size (8-inch x 11-inch) “High-Rise Fire Depository Box Key Tags” Legend Card shall be provided and maintained in the Fire Depository Box (FDB). The Legend Card, printed in lettering with a font size of at least an 18 point font that is readily legible, shall describe all the required keys and their functions and the respective key tag colors. See example of Legend Card below.

## High-Rise Depository Box Key Tags

Fire Service Phase 1	Phase 1 recalls Elevator Cars to predetermined floor.
Fire Service Phase 2	Phase 2 places Elevator Car in Firefighter control.
Fire Service Phase 1 & 2	Phase 1 and Phase 2 uses same key.
Elevator Car Door	Opens Elevator Car Doors after elevator has been recalled in Phase 1 and doors have previously opened and closed.
Elevator Inspection On/Off	Can be used to stop elevator when there is no Emergency Stop / Run Switch.
Elevator Emergency Stop/Run	Allows you to stop elevator at a point in elevator shaft.
Elevator Car Access Panel	Opens panel containing Emergency Stop/Run Switch and/or Independent Service Switch.
Elevator Emergency Power Selector	Allows you to select which Elevator Car will operate under Emergency Power.
Building Sprinkler & Standpipe Locks	Unlocks Sprinkler / Standpipe Control Valves.



<b>Building Stairway Doors</b>	Unlocks All Stairway doors.
<b>Building Roof Access - Stair A</b>	Roof access in Stairway (Example A, B etc.)
<b>Building Mechanical Rooms</b>	Unlocks Mechanical / HVAC room doors.
<b>Building Electrical Rooms</b>	Unlocks Electrical Panel Closet/Room doors.
<b>Elevator Rooms</b>	Unlocks Elevator Equipment room doors.

## References

1. City of Houston *Fire Code*.
2. Life Safety Bureau (LSB) Standard No. 06, "Key Depository Boxes"
3. Life Safety Bureau (LSB) Standard No. 07, "High-Rise Fire Safety Plan"
4. Life Safety Bureau (LSB) Standard No. 08, "Fire Drills"
5. Fire Marshal's Letter, "Burning Issues"
6. Fire Marshal's Letter, "Fire Alarm System Maintenance During Construction in High-Rise Buildings"
7. (LSB) "High-Rise Apartment/Condominium Fire Safety Plan"
8. (LSB) "High-Rise Hotel Fire Safety Plan"
9. (LSB) "High-Rise Office Building Fire Safety Plan"

All reference materials used under this Life Safety Bureau standard shall be in accordance with the most current adopted City of Houston *Construction Code*.