

Fire department offers key boxes

The Bainbridge Fire Department will be offering residential key boxes beginning on Oct. 1. The key boxes provide access for emergency responders in the event the resident is not home or unable to unlock the door, according to Bainbridge Fire Chief Lou Ann Metz. The key secure boxes provide a way to secure a key for first responders.

There are two options for the boxes. One option is a box that hangs over the door and is secured when the door is closed. The other option is a box that is mounted next to the door on the outside of the house.

Both boxes have a unique key that only the police and fire departments will have. The devices have been used for many years on commercial properties, Chief Metz said. They are very secure and durable. She noted that the department often encounters patients who are too sick or injured to unlock the door for the department and the boxes give responders access to patients without having to damage a door or window.

The department also encounters problems when homeowners are away and their alarm system is activated. Because the house is locked up, they are unable to do a thorough search for the problem without forcing entry into the house. The boxes eliminate the need to damage property in order to gain entry, according to Chief Metz.

The fire department is also reminding residents of the importance of assuring that their house number is visible from the street, either on a post, the house itself or on the mailbox. The key boxes and reflective address signs are available through the fire department.

The cost for the key box is \$35. The fire department can assist residents with installation. The cost for the reflective address signs is \$15. Residents can contact the fire department at 440-543-9873 for more information.