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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Fire Department launches secure lockbox program *Melissa Rotary Club donation finances initial devices*

MELISSA (October 10, 2018) First responders in Melissa now have a new non-destructive method of entering selected residences where the occupants are either not present or unable to open a locked entry, thanks to a \$4,000 donation from the Melissa Rotary Club.

Fire Chief Harold Watkins accepted the donation at a recent City Council meeting and announced plans to use the funds to purchase 30 Knox Home Box key storage lockboxes. The lockboxes are secure methods of stowing entry keys that firefighters or emergency medical technicians can use to gain access to locked homes.

These devices are vital to homeowners or occupants who may become incapacitated and unable to open a door, or who may not be present, when an emergency occurs. Responding Fire Department personnel can gain entry to the residence by unlocking the lockbox, securing the keys to the structure and entering without damaging the property. First responders are the sole holders of the lockbox keys.

Fire Department records were used to select the initial 30 recipients of the key storage lockboxes, identifying residences where the devices were best utilized. These included occupants who are likely to be impaired or who are frequently absent from the location.

The program is voluntary for residents, and because of the Rotary donation, was implemented at no charge to participating homes.

“We are extremely grateful to the members of the Melissa Rotary Club for the donation that allowed us to kick off this important program,” said Chief Watkins. “The program has the potential to save lives and protect property and fits right into our mission as a Fire Department. The partnership between the Fire Department and the Rotary Club is one which can have an immediate and significant impact on our residents.”

While other communities may have similar programs, the Melissa Fire Department is one of about 100 departments among the nation’s 30,000 utilizing the Knox Home Box, a leader in the industry.

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**ABOUT THE CITY OF MELISSA** – The City of Melissa is a fast-growing progressive suburb with a small-town feel, located 35 miles north of downtown Dallas in the dynamic growth area of northeast Collin County. Melissa sits on 21 square miles, is home to over 10,000 people, and is easily accessible by way of three intersecting highways. Melissa has ample inventory of the highly-sought-after undeveloped frontage available on US 75 and SH 121, primed to serve a retail trade area of over 40,000 people. A home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government, Melissa’s vision is to, “Leverage our community spirit, our passion for service and our beauty to grow a unique community that welcomes your future with us.”