



CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS FIRE DEPARTMENT



25 Meade Street - 01610

FIRE PREVENTION OFFICE AND FAX NUMBERS

OFFICE: (508) 799-1822

FAX: (508) 799-1900

Michael Lavoie
Chief

Robert Courtney
District Chief

March 1, 2018

Dear Masterbox Subscriber,

The Worcester Fire Department would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your partnership with us so that we may provide the most effective response to your facility in the event of an alarm. As a Worcester Fire Department masterbox subscriber, your fire alarm system is connected directly to our communications department operators who dispatch the fire companies to your facility in the event of an alarm. As such, there is no middleman between receipt of an alarm and the dispatching of fire companies as may be encountered with other alarm monitoring services.

The Worcester Fire Department currently operates two types of masterboxes with different means of alarm of transmission. The first type is a hard-wired BANA circuit. This is essentially a dedicated telephone line from your fire alarm system to our communications department at 9-11 Lincoln Square. This line is supplied and maintained by the telephone company (currently Verizon). If your masterbox number is a four digit number starting with a 2, this is the type of connection you have. The Worcester fire department began using these BANA lines in the 1980s when the municipal street box alarm system was taken out of service.

The second type of masterbox is a wireless radio box. This is a wireless radio transmitter that is attached to your fire alarm system and transmits alarms directly to our communications department wirelessly. This is analogous to the use of a cellular telephone in comparison to a hard-wired telephone line. If you have a four digit masterbox number that starts with a 1, this is the type of connection you have. With the wireless masterbox there are no bills from the telephone company, and the alarm monitoring fee from the Worcester Fire Department remains the same as for the hard-wired line.

For the past three years, we have sent letters with your invoice advising you that there would come a time when the city of Worcester would no longer support hard-wired BANA circuits as a means of masterbox transmission. We have established a phase-out date of **March 31, 2018** for the hard wired BANA line masterboxes.

As of this date, all current masterbox subscribers using hard-wired BANA circuits must either install a wireless radio transmitter or have their fire alarm system monitored by a qualified central station alarm monitoring service. The City of Worcester has set a deadline to discontinue the monitoring of the BANA circuit masterboxes on March 31, 2018.

At this time, we urge you to consider planning on switching to a wireless masterbox if your facility still uses a hard wired BANA circuit (if you have a four digit masterbox number that starts with a 2.) As programming and installation of the radio transmitters takes several hours to complete, our staff will not be able to accommodate all subscribers wishing to switch at the last minute. Please plan on making your switch ahead of the deadline, so our staff will have the ability to accommodate everyone.

Wireless masterboxes do require an initial investment in the purchase and installation of the radio transmitter of approximately \$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00. We believe that this investment cost will be recouped in the long run as fees from the telephone company to provide a BANA circuit will no longer be required.

Inquiries for new wireless masterbox installation can be made to the Worcester Fire Department Masterbox Technician Keith Carnevale at 508-799-1815; 617-921-0533 or Carnevalek@worcesterma.gov. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards,

Captain Tom Bull
Worcester Fire Department
Fire Prevention Division

CC: KC; RC