



Emergency locksmith companies can gouge you when you are most vulnerable

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Better Business Bureau Says Jacked-Up Prices Can Leave You Out In The Cold

PR9.NET February 25, 2008 - Wallingford, CT – If you have ever locked yourself out of your home or car, then you know the feeling of relief when a locksmith shows up. But Better Business Bureau warns that emergency locksmith companies sometimes take advantage of people in such situations by adding charges --- sometimes four times as high as quoted over the telephone.

Better Business Bureau files say it is a common practice:

Someone gets locked out of their car, calls a locksmith and is quoted \$39.00 for the service.

In the case of a Florence, KY woman, however, a company charged not only \$39.00, but also an additional \$110.00 for a total of \$149.00, payable on the spot, a far cry from their original quote. The company she called, "Always Ready," was, in fact, a company called "Dependable Locksmith," operating out of the Bronx, NY.

Better Business Bureau says the Kentucky woman's experience is common and issued a warning about what it calls a "Nationwide Locksmith Swindle" involving "Dependable Locksmith."

"Dependable," which BBB says operates under more than a dozen names, has an unsatisfactory record with 160 complaints in the last 12 months, for a total of more than 220 in the last 36 months.

Another scam involves locksmiths who recommend the installation of high-security locks and then turn around and install sub-standard locks.

BBB says they've received more than a thousand complaints, most over the past year or so, about companies that have legitimate sounding names and use local phone numbers with fake addresses. But when you dial the number, you're transferred to a call center that could be thousands of miles away.

They're not forthcoming about where they're located. They quote you a price and dispatch one of their representatives in your area.

To prevent becoming a victim of the locksmith swindle, Better Business Bureau recommends:

1. When you call a locksmith look for an ad with a local address.
2. Ask where their office is located.
3. Be wary of servicemen in unmarked cars, who don't wear uniforms or present identification.
4. Finally, ask if there may be extra charges, so you don't end up with a bill you cannot afford.

It is better to find a reliable locksmith before you need one. You may either visit our web site www.bbb.org, or call us at 203-269-2700 extension 2.

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About Better Business Bureau Connecticut

Founded in 1912, BBB is an unbiased non-profit organization that sets and upholds high standards for fair and honest business behavior. BBB offers objective advice and a wide range of education on topics affecting marketplace trust. BBB also offers complaint and dispute resolution support for consumers and businesses. Today, 128 BBBs serve communities across the U.S. and Canada, evaluating and monitoring more than three million local and national businesses and charities. For more advice on finding companies and businesses, start your search with trust at www.bbb.org.

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