

LOCKSMITH DRAMA

Trap

Mary's Boca Raton home had been broken into and her flat screen TV stolen. After the police left, she looked through the phone book for a locksmith. She saw an advertisement with a website. The business claimed to be licensed, bonded and insured. She called and they quoted a reasonable rate but arrived in an unmarked van. The "Technician" told Mary that the fee was misquoted. He would need to be paid for the service call PLUS the 1 hour minimum rate. Feeling a little intimidated, she agreed. Mary later suspected that she paid too much after visiting a local building supply store. Still upset by the robbery, she was now angry. Mary had paid three times the amount for the same lock and felt she had been robbed twice!

Tips

Mary was robbed but did she really know who replaced the new lock on her front door?

- There is no professional licensing for locksmiths in Florida. However, doing business in Palm Beach County requires an annual Business Tax Receipt, formerly known as an Occupational License. Look for certification with the Association of Locksmiths of America, or other organization that shows a person has passed competency tests
- Ask for proof the business is bonded and insured in case your home is damaged. Do they have worker's compensation coverage for their employees?
- Does the business also require the employee to pass a criminal background check and/or drug test?
- Be sure the locksmith has a local shop and not just a website. Get a receipt with a verifiable address and telephone number should you have a problem
- Get that quote in writing, they can send it by mail or by email if necessary. Multiple quotes are always a good idea

For more information, call Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs



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