

4/20/15 - Research Results: Keyless Deadbolt Locks

One of our recent questions was , "Do you have keyless deadbolts in your units? If so, can you recommend a good company that sells them? see responses below for vendors of keyless deadbolts

A reminder for those of you who have been around awhile and an FYI for new folks: State law requires keyless deadbolts on all rental property EXCEPT units occupied by those 55 and older or disabled/handicapped. If you do not have them on family units, you are not in compliance with state law and could be leaving yourself open for a lawsuit (safety of resident issues).

Below is the whole excerpt from the Property Code. (Property Code, Title 8 Landlord and Tenant, Chapter 92 Residential Tenancies, Subchapter D, Security Devices)

Sec. 92.152 APPLICATION OF SUBCHAPTER

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- (b) Except as provided by Subsection (a), a dwelling to which this subchapter applies includes:
- (1) a room in a dormitory or rooming house;
 - (2) a mobile home;
 - (3) a single family house, duplex, or triplex; and
 - (4) a living unit in an apartment, condominium, cooperative, or townhome project.

Sec. 92.153. SECURITY DEVICES REQUIRED WITHOUT NECESSITY OF TENANT REQUEST.

(a) Except as provided by Subsections (b), (e), (f), (g), and (h) and without necessity of request by the tenant, a dwelling must be equipped with:

- (1) a window latch on each exterior window of the dwelling;
- (2) a doorknob lock or keyed dead bolt on each exterior door;
- (3) a sliding door pin lock on each exterior sliding glass door of the dwelling;
- (4) a sliding door handle latch or a sliding door security bar on each exterior sliding glass door of the dwelling; and
- (5) a keyless bolting device and a door viewer on each exterior door of the dwelling.

(b) If the dwelling has French doors, one door of each pair of French doors must meet the requirements of Subsection (a) and the other door must have:

- (1) a keyed dead bolt or keyless bolting device capable of insertion into the doorjamb above the door and a keyless bolting device capable of insertion into the floor or threshold, each with a bolt having a throw of one inch or more; or
- (2) a bolt installed inside the door and operated from the edge of the door, capable of insertion into the doorjamb above the door, and another bolt installed inside the door and operated from the edge of the door capable of insertion into the floor or threshold, each bolt having a throw of three-fourths inch or more.

(c) A security device required by Subsection (a) or (b) must be installed at the landlord's expense.

(d) Subsections (a) and (b) apply only when a tenant is in possession of a dwelling.

(e) A keyless bolting device is not required to be installed at the landlord's expense on an exterior door if:

(1) the dwelling is part of a multiunit complex in which the majority of dwelling units are leased to tenants who are over 55 years of age or who have a physical or mental disability;

(2) a tenant or occupant in the dwelling is over 55 years of age or has a physical or mental disability; and

(3) the landlord is expressly required or permitted to periodically check on the well-being or health of the tenant as a part of a written lease or other written agreement.

(f) A keyless bolting device is not required to be installed at the landlord's expense if a tenant or occupant in the dwelling is over 55 years of age or has a physical or mental disability, the tenant requests, in writing, that the landlord deactivate or not install the keyless bolting device, and the tenant certifies in the request that the tenant or occupant is over 55 years of age or has a physical or mental disability. The request must be a separate document and may not be included as part of a lease agreement. A landlord is not exempt as provided by this subsection if the landlord knows or has reason to know that the requirements of this subsection are not fulfilled.

(g) A keyed dead bolt or a doorknob lock is not required to be installed at the landlord's expense on an exterior door if at the time the tenant agrees to lease the dwelling:

(1) at least one exterior door usable for normal entry into the dwelling has both a keyed dead bolt and a keyless bolting device, installed in accordance with the height, strike plate, and throw requirements of Section 92.154; and

(2) all other exterior doors have a keyless bolting device installed in accordance with the height, strike plate, and throw requirements of Section 92.154.

(h) A security device required by this section must be operable throughout the time a tenant is in possession of a dwelling. However, a landlord may deactivate or remove the locking mechanism of a doorknob lock or remove any device not qualifying as a keyless bolting device if a keyed dead bolt has been installed on the same door.

lock sources:

HD Supply - 13 PHAs specifically mentioned

Home Depot

Lowes - 2

Local Hardware store - 3

McDonald Dash 1-800-238-7541

Wilmar

Landlordlocks.com

comments:

HD SUPPLY, Maintenance USA, Supply Works, or any similar maintenance supply company would be a good start. I don't recommend getting them off the shelf at a local supplier as then you'll most likely have to pay another party to get them keyed to match your master key. Also, FYI: A recent newspaper report covered problems associated with landlords using off-the-shelf lock sets and finding out later on that they were all keyed to the same set-up. Enterprising tenants could try their key until they found another apartment that it fit! Viola! Free stuff. After this report appeared in our

local paper, I checked the shelf at a local hardware chain store and the first style of lock I looked at had 8 sets available, six of which had the same 4-digit number. After checking with the manager over that department, he confirmed that 4 digit number identified the key sequence. Same 4-digits, same key. So, it might cost a few more pennies at somewhere like HD Supply or Maintenance USA or Supply Works, but it's not JUST about the cost at Point-of-Sale.

We have a few keyless deadbolts, but prefer to use Keyless Door Anchor Bolt from HD Supply to meet this requirement.

We order them through Texas Lock & Door Closure, San Antonio, TX. We order our keys from Falcon.

Kwikset Locks were mentioned by three as the preferred brand.