

Phony Locksmiths Showing Up in Phone Book

Advertisement

CHICAGO - Just catch one whiff of the aromas and there's no reason to doubt you're at the Peking Chinese Kitchen Restaurant. But if you look in the AT&T Yellow Pages, the A-124 Locksmith Company should be here.

As it turns out, the new Yellow Pages is filled with bogus addresses for locksmiths.

Four years ago, Fox Chicago News caught a New York company using phony addresses in the Chicago area. The companies hope desperate consumers will believe they're calling a neighborhood locksmith; consumers like Weston Harding, locked out of his car at 8 in the morning.

"They told me the guy would call me back, told me the guy would call me back. Finally after 9:45, I couldn't take it any more, wound up calling a different place to get my keys cut," says Harding

Locksmiths who do have shops here say phony addresses are just part of the problem.

"The \$45 charge goes to one 100, 200, 300 dollars whereas our charge would have been \$80," says locksmith Gerald Menard.

We tried calling the locksmith company that uses the same address as the Chinese restaurant but the company never returned our call. For its part, AT&T says it's been investigating, and has already removed more than ninety thousand invalid listings.

That may work online, but the printed Yellow Pages still show locksmiths at locations like U.S. Cellular Field, the George Dunne County Building, and Kluczynski Federal Building.

The locksmiths even listed one particular building in the Loop as one of their addresses. It's 100 West Randolph, which turns out to be the Thompson Center and the headquarters for Attorney General Lisa Madigan, who said this appears to be nothing more than one big scam.

"You're not going to necessarily be getting a company that's in your neighborhood. You could well be getting a company that is based out of New York," says Madigan.

LEGAL

BRINGING YOU
**NEW
LOWER
RATES**




Allstate
CHICAGO'S OWN
GOOD HANDSSM

QUOTE NOW