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Locked Out In St. Louis

Schlage survey shows some local homeowners get locked out up to five times a year after losing their keys or 'hiding them' so well they forgot where they put them

St. Louis (October 10, 2011) – In St. Louis, many residents are getting locked out of their homes, and they're also out of luck when it comes to finding a hidden emergency key to get in, according to a new "Key Hiding Habits¹" survey of local residents. Schlage, a business of Ingersoll Rand and the nation's leading lock manufacturer, conducted the survey to better determine St. Louis area residents' home security needs.

According to the survey, getting locked out of the house happens more than many would think. Over the past 12 months, a quarter of those polled have been locked out at least once; 12 percent have been locked out twice; and 9 percent have even been locked out five times or more. Some homeowners purposely hide an emergency key somewhere on their property for such purposes—yet, among those who do, 20 percent indicated they forgot where they had hidden the key, again leading to an opportunity for a lockout situation.

"A lost key can be a real problem for homeowners, especially if they have children who need to gain entrance to the home after school or activities, or if homeowners need to provide access to anyone else while they're not home," said Chris DeSchamp, Schlage Portfolio Leader, Electronic Security. "Instead of hiding a key and hoping it can be found, a safe, easy solution is to upgrade to an [electronic keypad lock](#). It can be installed in just minutes and solves security headaches for families," says DeSchamp.

Where-oh-where are my lost keys?

As to where St. Louis homeowners find their missing keys, three-fifths of women (58 percent) most often find them in their purse. Meanwhile, men are most likely to find missing keys in their pocket (18 percent), a drawer (17 percent) or their car (15 percent). Even if they do find their keys, one-third of homeowners still rely on coping mechanisms for the next lockout, whether it's leaving an extra key to the main door with a neighbor, or hiding one under a flowerpot or bush.

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Throw out the key, stay worry-free

Given all their problems with lost keys, hidden keys and foggy memories, seven in 10 St. Louis residents said they would find a keypad lock appealing (71 percent), including three in 10 (31 percent) who would find it extremely appealing. Not surprisingly, parents were significantly more likely (15 percent) than non-parents to find [keypad locks](#) appealing (5 percent).

In addition, more than half (53 percent) of respondents indicated that the advantage to a keypad lock would be better security because they would be able to regularly change the key code to control who has access to their home. Men were more likely than women to believe it would be an advantage to provide guests with a key code for easier access. Parents were also significantly more likely than non-parents to believe key codes would provide an advantage.

Who holds the keys? Men vs. women and other survey findings

- **Too many keys:** Virtually all respondents indicated that they carry multiple keys on their keychain (94 percent) and two-fifths of respondents carry five or more keys. On average, men carry more keys than women.
- **Key-hiding traditions:** One-half of respondents remember having a hidden spare key to their home while growing up. Keys were most often hidden beneath a flowerpot, doormat, bush or inside a fake rock. Garages were not used very frequently as a hiding spot.
- **Useless mystery keys:** One-fifth of respondents carry at least one key they no longer use. Men were significantly more likely than women to carry a key they no longer use.

For homeowners who wish to eliminate worries about lost keys or the need to keep making new ones, Schlage offers electronic locks that provide keyless entry to a home using secure, pre-programmed access codes. The locks can be installed by do-it-yourselfers and allow homeowners to add, change or delete access codes in seconds, ensuring people can come and go as they please.

With a 90-year heritage, Schlage is America's most trusted brand for security, and is the most preferred residential door lock brand by consumers² and most used by builders³. For more information on Schlage electronic locks, visit www.keyless.schlage.com.

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¹The “Key Hiding Habits” public opinion survey was conducted by Russell Research, an independent survey research firm, on behalf of Schlage. Research was conducted online from August 29-September 6, 2011 among 511 St. Louis single-family homeowners ages 18 or older. The margin of error for the survey is +/-4.4 percentage points. The survey was funded by Ingersoll Rand.

²Research Now, independent research report funded by Ingersoll Rand Co., 2011

³Builder Magazine, April 2011

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