



CASE STUDIES

Agency

David City Housing Authority (David City, Nebraska)
55 Public Housing Units

Contact

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“Switching to InstaKey was one of the best decisions I’ve made.”

Renee Williams, Executive Director,
David City Housing Authority

Former Lock Program: Traditional lock system requiring replacement of deadbolts for lock changes; keys could be duplicated.

Reason for Conversion

Before implementing InstaKey, David City Housing Authority relied on traditional keys and had limited visibility into how many keys were in circulation or whether additional copies had been made. Rekeying could also require locating and waiting for a locksmith, which was particularly difficult for a small rural agency with limited staff. At times, Williams was responsible for handling lock changes herself and needed a system that was simple, fast and did not require specialized locksmith knowledge.

David City selected InstaKey to improve key accountability while giving housing authority staff the ability to change access quickly when needed. Restricted, serialized keys provided greater control over issued keys, while user-rekeyable locks allowed staff to rekey a unit in minutes without waiting for an outside locksmith service call.

Budget Acquisition

David City Housing Authority used its operating budget to procure a much-needed InstaKey master key system for its 55 units. Recognizing the need to improve the existing key system, the Executive Director included the project as a line item in the annual budget for approval. The investment allowed the agency to resecure its property, strengthen security, and improve ongoing key management.

Implementation Strategy

The program gave David City a repeatable approach to key management that staff could learn and manage internally. The agency established a consistent number of keys for each apartment, making it easier to identify when all assigned keys had been returned and when a rekey was appropriate. When questions about existing keys arose, serialized key information could also be used to help account for keys associated with the system.

The approach proved useful beyond David City. As Williams assumed responsibility for three additional housing authorities, she continued implementing the same key control process. Consistency across the agencies simplified staff training, reduced the need to learn different keying procedures at each location and provided a familiar process for managing keys with limited administrative resources.

On-Going Program Benefit

David City staff can now rekey a unit internally in seconds, reducing the expense and delay associated with waiting for a locksmith. Williams described the speed of the process by noting that it could take longer to walk from the front door to the back door than to rekey the lock. The agency also gained better visibility into issued keys and greater confidence in responding when a key is unreturned or potentially compromised.

That speed has a direct tenant-security benefit. Williams shared that if a tenant reports that a significant other who should not have access still has a key and refuses to return it, she can walk to the unit with the tenant and rekey the lock immediately rather than leaving the tenant waiting for a locksmith.

Today, the same key control approach supports Williams across four housing authorities totaling 125 units. She credits the simplicity and consistency of the program with making staff training and day-to-day key management easier, while responsive support has helped sustain the program over the long term.