

Is Your Community Secure? **By Leslie DiStefano**

Over the last few years, many homeowner and condo associations have been faced with personal and community security issues brought upon them by an ever increasing amount of foreclosures, abandoned properties as well as a steady increase in crime.

All associations should be conscious of security issues and make their communities and grounds reasonably safe and secure for all homeowners. There are many relatively inexpensive things the association and residents can do. While a neighborhood Watch Committee is helpful, most board members find it difficult to recruit the participation of enough homeowners in the community to make this a viable solution.

Choosing a reliable and professional security company is a major decision, which will significantly impact the security and image of your community and the credibility of the decision makers. Select wisely. All companies are not the same. Many epitomize the "guard" stereotype, but others are focused on the customer, the employee and on developing long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships. The following checklist should help you find a truly professional security company.

It is strongly recommended that you ask the provider to supply you with the following information:

1. Annual employee turnover rate. (How long do they retain their employees?)
2. Management stability (how long do they retain their managers?)
3. Customer retention rate how long do they keep their customers? (A copy of their customer satisfaction survey)
4. Letters of recommendation
5. Worker's compensation experience modification factor (EMF). This factor gives you an indication of their worker's comp losses as compared with others in the industry.
6. Year-to-date and five-year OSHA injury incident rate. (These statistics provide an indication as to the provider's commitment to safety. Statistics show that a safety-conscious company will also have low liability claims and more attentive officers.
7. Copy of the provider's insurance certificate

8. Meet with the local personnel who will be supporting your account. After all, you are considering hiring them for your property. Ask the following:
 9. How long have you been with the company?
 10. What makes your company different?
 11. What are your backgrounds?
 12. What value will they bring to your account?
 13. What is the mission of their company?
 14. Choose a sampling of the provider's clients to contact as references. Ask them about their experience with the provider, both good and bad.
 15. Would you recommend a friend to join your company?
 16. What is your account turnover rate?
 17. Visit the provider's training facility and ask to see the materials given to class participants. What kind of training is provided to supervisors and managers?
 18. Obtain a copy of the provider's services contract. Pay particular attention to the Indemnification Agreement section to ensure that; you are not held liable if the provider's officers are negligent.
 19. Find out what other security and customer support services are provided by the security company that support your needs and give you greater value in your relationship with them.

Although this list may seem extensive, when you place your property in the hands of another company, you need to have the best information possible in order to make a wise decision.

Leslie DiStefano works for Kent Security Services with its corporate office located in N. Miami Beach, FL and satellite offices throughout the state of Florida.

Please give her a call at 305-610-9876 or e-mail ldistefano@kentsecurity.com to discuss the full service security options available from Kent Security including, but not limited to security guard services, risk assessment/consulting, valet services, closed circuit television (CCTV), access control/intrusion detection, parking and gate systems, remote video monitoring, visitor screening systems, alarm monitoring services and maintenance agreements. Also feel free to visit Kent's website www.kentsecurity.com.



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President's Message

I would like to thank Leslie Distefano from Kent Security Services for providing the wonderful article on security services for this edition of the Banyan Newsleaf.

Over the last 11 years we have earned a reputation for providing high quality management services at very competitive costs. If you would like to learn more about how Banyan Property Management could help reduce expenses in your community please give me a call for a free no obligation quote. As always, I welcome any suggestions for future newsletter articles. If you have any questions about our complete line of property management services, please call me at (561) 649-8585 Ext. 337 or alternatively my email address is mark.quinn@banyanproperty.com.

Cordially,
Mark J. Quinn
President

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