VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Locksmiths

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Locksmith — Call-Out and Hardware

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Locksmiths The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

First edition, November 2026, revised 12 November 2026. Built from VyRal's lane research as it stood on 11 November 2026.

© 2026 VyRal Dynasty Holdings LLC, a South Carolina company. All rights reserved. A VyRal Dynasty product.

How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

Contents

1. The short answer for your trade
2. What people in your trade say hurts
3. Get your paper together
4. Leak 1: Life-Safety Egress Hardware — The One Hard Line
5. Leak 2: High-Security Cylinder Standard (ANSI/BHMA A156.30)
6. Leak 3: State Licensing Patchwork
7. Leak 4: BLS Wage Benchmark
8. Leak 5: Self-Employment Tax (SECA) Boundary
9. Leak 6: The Service Vehicle and Tooling (Pride Economy)
10. Leak 7: The Disclosure-Before-Work Line (Anti-Bait-and-Switch)
11. Leak 8: Master-Key Design as an Engineering Deliverable
12. More leaks to check
13. Grow it: the next rung
14. The household side: TrueNET
15. Your 30-day leak plan
16. Take it into LeakReceipts
17. Sources
18. Your leak log

The short answer for your trade

A locksmith's price gets set at the door, under time pressure, for a customer who can't see the job either and is often locked out and anxious. That single improvised number has no line for skilled labor (origination, impressioning, rekeying), no line for high-security key control, no named after-hours premium, and no separate line for master-key design — it all disappears into one flat figure. The same gap where an honest operator can under-price their own skill is exactly where a fake-listing scam economy lives: state consumer-protection agencies and Google's own March 2025 lawsuit against a 10,000-listing fake-business network both confirm locksmiths are a top target for lowball-phone-quote, much-higher-price-at-the-door fraud. The line between the two is disclosure: naming the real price and its variables before any work starts.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	Life-Safety Egress Hardware — The One Hard Line	Major	VERIFIED	1
2	High-Security Cylinder Standard (ANSI/BHMA A156.30)	Significant	VERIFIED	1
3	State Licensing Patchwork	Moderate	VERIFIED	1
4	BLS Wage Benchmark	Small but common	VERIFIED	1
5	Self-Employment Tax (SECA) Boundary	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
6	The Service Vehicle and Tooling (Pride Economy)	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
7	The Disclosure-Before-Work Line (Anti-Bait-and-Switch)	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
8	Master-Key Design as an Engineering Deliverable	Significant	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

Then there are 4 more leaks to check, each with its own fixes, in the chapter called More leaks to check.

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

Fake listings and lead-sellers take my emergency calls and push up what I pay per click

When someone is locked out, they call the first number on the map. Thousands of fake locksmith listings sit there and pass the call to whoever pays for it. I either lose the call or pay more per click to win it, and customers who got burned by a bait price before distrust my honest phone quote.

Found in 5 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-09. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Newer cars lock me out of key programming, so the job goes to the dealer

On some makes and the newest model years, I can't program a key at all, or only with gear that costs more than the job pays. Some brands send new keys only through dealer orders tied to the VIN. When I can't do it, the customer pays the dealer more and I lose a high-dollar job. The federal bill that would open up repair data hasn't passed.

Found in 4 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-13. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I pay every year for programmer updates and security access just to keep doing car keys

Car-key work needs a key programmer whose updates are sold as a yearly subscription, plus a paid security registration to pull key codes and immobilizer data. Those bills come due whether or not the car-key calls come in.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2025-09-01. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Every licensing state or city charges its own fees and insurance minimum

About a dozen states, plus some cities and counties, license locksmiths. Each has its own fees, background check and insurance minimum, and a license in

one place does not carry to the next. Working near a line means paying twice, and a lapse or a slow card can stop the work.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-07-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Kiosks and big-box counters took the small key jobs that used to fill my day

Copying a house key, and now even some car keys and fobs, happens at a machine in the grocery or hardware store. Simple lock swaps are DIY now. Those small, quick jobs used to pay for my time between bigger calls. Now more of my day is drive time and emergency calls.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-13. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Van and liability insurance cost thousands before my first call

I work out of the van, and its commercial auto policy is my biggest insurance bill. Licensing states also set liability minimums. These run every month no matter how many calls come in.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-05-27. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: Life-Safety Egress Hardware — The One Hard Line

Size grade: Major · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. Panic hardware and fire-exit hardware on required egress doors must always allow people to exit — under the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code and the International Building Code, this hardware can never be "dogged" (locked in a way that blocks release), and no device may be added that could block the latch from releasing.

Why it leaks. Not a leak — the one line in this trade that must never be crossed for any commercial reason: compromising egress hardware to save cost, speed a job, or accommodate a customer request is a life-safety violation, not a service shortcut.

The number to hold it against. Panic and fire-exit hardware on qualifying egress doors must always permit exit; the occupant-load thresholds that trigger it vary by the locally adopted code edition. Source: NFPA 101 Life Safety Code; International Building Code, confirmed August 21, 2026.

VERIFIED · Primary — the organisation's own figure

> **Ask yourself:** Has a customer ever asked you to modify egress hardware in a way that would block it from releasing — and did you know that request can never be honored, regardless of the reason given?

1. Request to modify egress hardware so it won't release — the one hard line (not a leak)

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. This is not a money problem and nothing here gets recovered. It is the line you never cross.
2. If a customer asks you to lock, chain, pin or otherwise block a panic bar or exit device so it won't open from inside, say no.
3. Offer what you can do legally instead — for example, alarmed exit hardware or access control that still lets people out.
4. If the customer pushes, tell them to ask their local fire marshal or building official what is allowed on that door.
5. Write down the request and your refusal, with the date, and keep it with the job.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

> Text or note to the customer when I decline:
>
> Hi [CUSTOMER NAME], this is [YOUR NAME] with [COMPANY]. About your request on [DATE] to [DESCRIBE — e.g., lock the rear exit so it can't be opened from inside]: I can't do that. Exit hardware on that door has to let people out at all times under the fire and building codes, and I won't change that for any reason.
>
> What I can offer instead: [OPTION — e.g., an alarmed exit device, a delayed-egress device if your fire marshal approves it, or access control on the outside]. If you'd like to know what's permitted on that door, your local fire marshal or building department can tell you.
>
> [YOUR NAME] — [COMPANY]

Fix 3 — Done for you. LeakReceipts

WE DO: keep a written record of every egress request you declined, with date and your note, filed with the job. YOU DO: make the call on site and send the note. Product: LeakReceipts.

Keep it closed. Decide now that egress requests are an automatic no, and keep the decline note ready to send.

What this fix can't decide for you. What a given door may legally have is the local authority having jurisdiction's call (fire marshal / building official). Delayed-egress devices are only an option where the local code and authority allow them. Not legal advice.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed − paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 8.

The full Field Guide for Locksmiths walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/locksmiths

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7