

Sunday, May 24, 2009

Who's the best alarm company: Vector Security, ADT, CPI security, Brinks Home Security or Monitronics International?



You have made the choice to install a monitored home security system and you want to select the best company. As a prudent shopper you want to do your research. You select ADT security systems, Brinks Home Security, Monitronics International, CPI Security and Vector Security as your top companies to select from. The critical point is using an objective and factual method to make his determination. The purpose of this article is provide a head to head comparison of these five companies using critical variables including the [Better Business Bureau rating](#), number of monitoring facilities, CSAA Five Diamond certification and number of overall complaints. With this comparison we will make to assumption that pricing is even.

The highest weight will be given to the Better Business Bureau Rating and overall report. The Highest mark given by the BBB is an A+ which will equal ten points on the 12 point scale. There is a deduction of .25 for every grade under A+. The number of monitoring facilities will also add to or subtract from the total score. A single monitoring facility means that the monitoring center does not have redundant backup in the event that a serious storm or act of war disables the call center. Any calls for emergency help from those monitored by them can not be re-routed to another facility to assure that those subscribers will receive the assistance they are in need of. A single monitoring facility will result in a deduction of .25, two monitoring facilities will add .50 and three or more monitoring facilities will add 1 point to the overall score. A company that is CSAA certified, not just a member of the central station alarm association will receive .25 added to the overall score. CSAA Five Diamond certification reflects that the central station operators have undergone a total of 96 hours of classroom training, as well as 8 weeks of training with a mentor in preparation of an emergency. Every operator has passed level 1 certification. The company also agrees to monthly training set up by the CSAA. The final factor is based on the total number of complaints. Any company that has under 30 complaints in a 36 month period will receive .75 added to the total score.

We will grade the companies in alphabetical order beginning with [ADT Security Services](#). ADT has a Better Business Bureau rating of A which is equivalent to 9.75. ADT has four monitoring call centers adding 1 point to the overall score. ADT is a member of the Central Station Alarm Association but is not Five Diamond Certified so there are no points added. Also ADT has had 1861 complaints in a 36 month period and does not receive any additional points in this category. The total overall score for ADT is 10.75.

[Brinks Home Security](#) based out of Irving Texas has an exemplary Better Business Bureau rating of A+, which is equivalent to 10 points. Brinks have two monitoring facilities one in Texas and the other in Tennessee adding .5 to the score. Brinks, like ADT, are a member of the CSAA but

are not Five Diamond Certified. There are no points added for this category. Brinks had 348 complaints in the last 36 months and do not receive any additional points in this category. It is only fair to say that all complaints were resolved. Brinks Home Security receives a total score of 10.5 points.

[CPI Security](#) based out of Charlotte, North Carolina has a very good Better Business Bureau rating of (A) which is equivalent to 9.75. CPI has only one call center and receives a deduction of .25. CPI is a member of the CSAA but is not Five Diamond Certified and receives no points in this category. CPI only had 25 complaints over the past 36 months and receives an additional .75 to its score. The total score for CPI is 10.25.

[Monitronics](#) International based out of Dallas Texas has a Better Business Bureau rating of C which is equivalent to 8 points. Monitronics receives a deduction for having only one monitoring facility and loses .25 of its total score. Monitronics International is Five Diamond Certified through the CSAA and receives an additional .25 to the total score. With 873 complaints to the Better Business Bureau no points are added in this category. The final score for Monitronics International is 8.0.

[Vector Security](#) based out of Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania has a Better Business Bureau rating of A+ which is equivalent to 10 points. Vector Security has 4 monitoring centers and receives 1 point in this category. Vector Security is Five Diamond Certified through the CSAA and receives .25 of a point to its total score. Vector Security had only 6 customer complaints in the previous 36 months and receives .75 to its final total. Vector Security receives a perfect score of 12 points, making it the best choice for security system monitoring out of this stellar group of companies.

1. Vector Security
2. ADT Security Systems
3. Brinks Home Security
4. CPI Security
5. Monitronics International

Posted by Jim McNeely at [2:52 PM](#)  

Labels: [ADT security](#), [Best Security Company](#), [Brinks Home Security](#), [cpi security](#), [Durham](#), [Home Security](#), [monitronics](#), [North Carolina](#), [Raleigh](#), [Vector Security](#)

Saturday, April 18, 2009

[ADT, CPI, and Brinks Not 5 Diamond Certified](#)



ADT security services, CPI and Brinks Home Security are not members of the Central Station Alarm Association and their alarm monitoring facilities have not received 5 diamond certification. This certification is the highest rating an alarm monitoring facility can receive from an outside rating association of industry peers. The distinction of a five diamond rating is an assurance to the general public that the alarm monitoring facility has met five distinct criteria signifying excellence. The five standards that must be met are:

- 1) Commitment to random inspections and quality criteria standards by a nationally recognized third-party laboratory such as: UL or FM.
- 2) Commitment to the highest levels of customer service.
- 3) Commitment to ongoing job-related education and testing by having 100% of its central station operators certified using the CSAA online training series.
- 4) Commitment to raising the industry standards through CSAA membership and participation in its activities.
- 5) Commitment to reducing false dispatches.

In the alarm industry there must be a higher level of transparency and openness with the general public that they serve. An outside third party lab can provide this assurance. In any other industry we demand certification and degrees supporting ones claim of competence. The alarm industry with the exception of general state licensing, which varies state to state, does not have a national uniform compliance code. Such a code could help assure higher levels of customer service, reduce false alarms, and raise industry standards. The fact that [ADT](#), CPI and [Brinks](#) are not members of [CSAA](#) and are not five diamond certified is not to imply that they are not good companies. However, with their large client bases they should be leading from the front and not trailing from the rear.

When selecting a company to provide alarm monitoring, look to companies that have met this criteria because they have reached a higher standard that will provide customers with a far better customer service experience due to increased education. A few companies that have met the Five Diamond Certification are Sentry Watch, Counter Force, Alarm Detection Systems, [Monitronics](#), and [Vector Security](#). Only 100 companies in the alarm industry have met these standards. A simple conclusion, bigger because of marketing does not make a company better.

Posted by Jim McNeely at [8:03 PM](#)  

Labels: [ADT](#), [Alarm Detection systems](#), [Brinks Home Security](#), [Central Station alarm association](#), [cpi security](#), [Five diamond certification](#), [monitronics](#), [sentry watch](#), [Vector Security](#)