

Combi-Cam

from FJM

As locksmiths, we have become quite familiar with electronic locks on commercial and also residential doors. A newer phenomenon is electronic cabinet locks. They vary in complexity, price, size and ease of installation. Among the more compact and easy to install electronic cabinet locks is the Combi-Cam from FJM (*photo 1*). Although the outside key pad is just over 3 inches high and almost an inch and a half wide, it is both versatile and sophisticated.



Installing the Combi-Cam

The Combi-Cam is fairly unique in that it is designed to retrofit as a replacement for most standard key operated mechanical cam locks. If you look at the back or body of the lock (*photo 2*), it looks like a rather ordinary cam lock. It should fit as a replacement for an existing cam lock with few limitations. At the top of the unit on the back side of the



by Sal Dulcamaro

keypad is an embedded mounting nut that will require a mounting machine screw to fasten the top of the key pad to the cabinet surface where you install the lock.

If you are installing from scratch, the instructions indicate a .63 inch or 16 mm hole for the cam lock body. That is roughly equivalent to a 5/8 inch hole which is .625 inch. If you are replacing an existing cam lock, you may find a 5/8 inch hole already or in many cases a three quarter inch hole. It should fit in either application. The paper template shows the upper mounting hole to be 2.44 inches (62 mm) from the center of the cam lock hole. The hole for the top mounting screw is listed as .16 inch or 4 mm. Your closest fractional drill sizes are either 5/32 (.15625 inch) or 3/16 (.1875 inch). Either drill size should probably work. If you have metric drill bits, you can just go with the 4 mm bit. If you use a 5/32 inch drill bit and the screw fits a bit tight, you can always work the bit in and out a bit to slightly enlarge the hole.

The Combi-Cam comes with three different lengths of mounting screws to account for different door or drawer thicknesses where the lock might be installed. Depending on the size and shape of the door or drawer, you may find yourself installing the keypad sideways to fit the application. Included with the lock are two straight cams: one rather short and one medium long.

Battery Power

The Combi-Cam is battery powered, but doesn't use AA or

AAA batteries. It uses a "button" type battery that you might see in a watch or similar device. According to the printed materials, one battery will last 10 years. The button battery comes installed in the lock when you open the package, but it is temporarily disabled with a piece of plastic (*photo 3*) that obstructs the battery contacts. That piece of plastic must be removed for the battery to activate the unit.



If the battery life is close to what they indicate, you probably don't need to worry about stocking a large volume of those type batteries. At the same time, when the battery finally goes, you will be less likely to have a button battery just floating about like you might have with AA or AAA batteries. The low battery warning (if you pay attention to it) should give you adequate time to find a replacement battery.

Features of Combi-Cam

There are many interesting features for the Combi-Cam. I have already mentioned that you can retrofit where there is an existing key operated mechanical cam lock and that it is quite fast and easy to install. It can be

installed left or right handed and the knob is torque proof. Besides having a long battery life, the low battery warning (LED) starts with 250 cycles remaining. That should give more than adequate time to find a replacement battery and install it. There are audio and visual alerts and warnings to indicate various conditions. It is light weight, compact and it is competitively priced.

The Combi-Cam has changeable codes that include 6 digits for the master code, 4 digits for user codes and 5 digits for service codes. In single user mode, the individual user would use the same code repeatedly for access to the contents protected by a Combi-Cam. Multiple user mode is what is identified as locker or one-time use mode. The 4 digit code would be set by individual users when the lock is unlocked and would unlock with that same code upon return. The next user would enter a different 4 digit code while it is unlocked and that set code would open the lock for that person. That process would be repeated for each one-time user.

Programming and Operation

The keypad on the Combi-



Cam has 10 digits ranging from 1 to 0 (photo 4). There are also * and # function keys. The master code is needed for programming and a default factory master code should be changed to a master code of your own choosing. To access the programming menu, you start out pressing the # button and then enter your 6 digit master code. Then the * button is pressed and specific programming codes are entered to program the lock. At the top of the keypad there are two LED's. The green LED is at the left and the red LED is at the right. Along



with audible sounds, the lighted LED's will indicate conditions and confirm or not confirm various programming actions.

The lock comes with installation and programming instructions in great detail, but also includes a compact reference card (photo 5), that gives brief reminder type programming instructions. The back of the card (photo 6) has spots to write existing or current codes.

The Combi-Cam is a very interesting lock. I can see many applications for such a compact and versatile lock.

TNL

For additional information about the Combi-Cam and other locks from FJM Security Products,

go to www.combi-cam.com/E/

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