

Morse Watchmans boosts compliance at US detention centre

By [Andy Ball](#) on August 29, 2013

Morse Watchmans' KeyWatcher key control and management system has been hailed as indispensable in securing New Mexico's Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Centre (MDC).

As the facility coordinator for MDC, Randy Donahoe follows strict guidelines, policies and procedures to ensure that security and control of the facility are maintained. Among the many tools at his disposal, Mr. Donahoe counts the Morse Watchmans KeyWatcher key control and management system as essential to this task.



“The KeyWatcher system does everything needed in a correctional environment including compliance with the ACA standard for key control,” said Mr. Donahoe. “The Morse Watchmans system ensures that our keys are properly stored, controlled and accounted for.”

The MDC is a 500,000 square foot direct supervision detention facility designed to provide state-of-the-art security and treatment programs for Bernalillo County. The regional jail is located in a fully self-contained 150-acre campus about 15 miles west of Albuquerque with a medical treatment suite, booking/intake center, administration space and kitchen, along with maximum, medium, and minimum security inmate holding areas. The facility houses an average population of more than 2,800 and employs a staff of more than 500. It is ranked 39th in size and considered a mega jail among the 3,300 jails in the United States. On average, 40,000 inmates are processed annually through the MDC.



The KeyWatcher Key Control System from Morse Watchmans, in use at MDC since 2007, controls access to the large number of keys used throughout the facility. When an officer or other pre-authorized user needs to access the key cabinet to retrieve or return a key, that individual must swipe their access card, then input their PIN code. If that PIN matches the information stored in the system database, the cabinet can be opened. Keys stored within the cabinet are attached to a locking mechanism and only those keys which the user is authorized to access will be released. All other keys will remain locked in place and all activity is recorded.

According to Mr. Donahoe, the controlled access to facility keys enabled by the KeyWatcher system not only helps to meet the American Correctional Association (ACA) standard but has improved their key control procedures by automating the key control access and tracking. He says, “From my computer, I can access the system to see which keys are out, who has keys out and when they are scheduled to be returned. If a key is missing, I can use the system to determine who last used that key. The system design has prevented issues we might have otherwise encountered in controlling and managing such a large number of keys.”

Mr. Donahoe continues, “The KeyWatcher system gives us accurate and complete user information instantly, and operation has been easy for our staff to learn and use. Overall, it ’s allowed for more accountability and control. ”

The KeyWatcher system has helped to create a safer and more secure environment for staff, visitors and inmates at the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center. And, as Mr. Donahoe says, “The KeyWatcher system has made it easier for everyone to comply with policies and procedures in the performance of their job. ”