



SECURITY TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Businesses can reduce their vulnerability to crime in many ways. Measures like locks, alarms, and good lighting make any establishment a less attractive target for criminals.

A major ally is your local law enforcement agency -- its officers can conduct a free security survey and give advice on alarm systems and other devices.

Community service and involvement are important safeguards against crime. Customers and neighbors who view a business as a valued resource to the community will watch out for its property and employees.

Employees and Crime:

- Employees can help you be profitable or hurt you through waste, inattention to customers, or stealing. You must set the example for honesty and develop clear policies regarding security and theft.
- Develop and advise all employees of inventory control procedures. All merchandise entering and exiting your premises should be accounted for.
- Screen employees carefully before hiring them. Check their backgrounds to be sure they have not been fired for behavior which you find is dangerous or unacceptable.
- Train employees in proper cash handling and security measures. Set policy regarding cash on hand and stick by it.
- Research shows that employees steal from businesses that are impersonal to them and lack clear policies. Show employees you care about them and their property.
- Provide a clean and orderly work environment with secure places for their personal belongings.

- Offer them personal child protection and home crime prevention information obtained from local law enforcement agencies and national organizations.
- Support their involvement in community organizations formed to prevent crime and help crime victims.

Robbery Prevention:

Businesses are robbed ten times more often than individuals, but common sense can reduce the chance of becoming a victim as well as the amount of money lost if you're robbed. Take this quiz to assess your vulnerability to robbery.

CASH: Do you:

- Keep only small amounts on hand and advertise this fact?
- Make frequent bank deposits?
- Have a drop safe or time delay safe?
- Vary your deposit time and route?
- Count cash only in a private area?

LIGHT, LOCKS, ALARMS: Do you:

- Have exterior and interior lighting that allows visibility into the store from the street?
- Have an emergency alarm system that works?
- Have a buddy system signal with a neighboring store in case suspicious persons enter?
- Keep seldom used doors and windows locked at all times?
- Use mirrors, cameras, or one way glass to observe all areas of the store?

EMPLOYEES: Is there:

- More than one person to open and close?
- Careful screening before hiring?
- Care taken to have employees notify police about loiterers who may be "casing" the store?
- Training on how to handle a robbery situation and effectively report it to the police?

HAVE YOU:

- Arranged your stock to allow clear visibility in the store?
- Set up a signal for the police patrol officer in case of problems?
- Arranged for a risk analysis security survey with the local police or sheriff department?
- Where you answered "NO", take corrective action now!

IF CONFRONTED BY A ROBBER:

- Stay as calm as possible. Try not to panic or show any signs of anger or confusion.
- Consider your well-being and that of your employees as the highest priority. Don't escalate the incident into a violent confrontation in which someone may be injured or killed.
- Make a conscious effort to get an accurate description of the robber(s):

- Age, race, complexion, body build, height, weight, type and color of clothing.
- After the robber leaves, call police immediately.

BURGLARY:

Burglary is a property crime that occurs when the business is closed. The burglar may enter through any opening (or, window, air conditioning duct, skylight) or even create one through an interior shared wall or an outside wall. Reduce your risk as much as possible. Burglary is a crime of opportunity that can be prevented.

Surveillance and Security Are Critical

- **Lighting.** Install bright interior and exterior lighting to make all openings visible from both the outside and the inside of the store.
- **Locks and Safes.** Purchase high quality door locks and use them. Grilles and storefront grates delay entry. Use an Underwriters Laboratory listed money safe, bolted to the floor and visible from the street.
- **Entry Control.** Know who has a key and restrict access to the front door.
- **Rekey the lock** if a once-trusted employee is discharged for cause. Rekey locks annually if you have high turnover of employees. Consider an access control system rather than keys.
- **Intrusion Alert.** Install a good quality alarm system to detect unauthorized entry. Check with your Better Business Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, law enforcement, and other businesses before you make this investment.
- **Windows.** Consider burglary resistant glass in accessible areas.
- **Unbreakable polycarbonate** may work even better, particularly if you have high value items in window displays.
- **Environment.** Keep areas around the store clean to aid visibility. Display your most valuable articles near the center of the store to force a burglar to take the longest possible escape route. Keep merchandise displays organized to allow maximum visibility throughout the store. Check closets and restrooms before you lock up. You don't need an unwanted visitor staying inside your store after closing hours.

Take Action - Get Involved With Your Community

- Learn about crime in your neighborhood and what is being done about it. Offer to help. You can provide expert advice, funding, publicity and meeting places for citizen efforts.
- Try to hire employees from the neighborhood and make a special effort to give teens an opportunity to work.
- Include crime prevention information in your staff memos and newsletters, customer statements and notices.
- Role play a robbery situation with your employees.
- If you use vehicles, teach your drivers to spot suspicious behavior and how to notify the police. If you're radio dispatched, train your dispatcher to report information effectively.
- Learn about crime victim services in your area and help any employees who are victimized by a serious crime.
- Bring the problems of business security, shop-lifting, vandalism, etc. to the attention of community leaders. Start a "Business Watch" to prevent crime.