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

### Employees and Security

Employees can help you to 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. Do a background check that includes reference checks and criminal record check.
- > 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 or 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.

### Cash

Cash is always at risk. Ensure any cash, be it the company's or your own, is kept out of sight and locked away. ALWAYS! Be sure to set company policy regarding petty cash.

Policies to consider

- > 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

### Surveillance and Security are Critical

Persons who you do not recognize, or who do not have either a company ID or a visitors badge displayed should be politely challenged. A simple "May I help you" is often enough to determine what the situation is.

### Lighting

- > Install bright interior and exterior lighting to make all openings visible from both the outside and the inside of the store.

### Locks

- > Purchase high quality door locks and use them. Grilles and storefront grates delay entry. Keep seldom used doors and windows locked at all times.

### Entry Control

- > Know who has a key and restrict access to the front door. Use mirrors, cameras, or one way glass to observe all areas of the store. 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. Ensure your system includes alarm response from a reputable security company.

### Windows

- > Consider burglary resistant glass in accessible areas. Unbreakable polycarbonate or security window film may work even better, particularly if you have high value items in window displays.

### Burglary

Burglary is a property crime that occurs when the business is closed. The burglar may enter through any opening (door, 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.

### Office Building - Unauthorized Visitors

Even the most strict access control measures can see an unauthorized person or even an authorized person who has not checked in, getting into our office areas without proper accreditation. Persons who you do not recognize, or who do not have either a company ID or a visitors badge displayed should be politely challenged. A simple "May I help you" is often enough to determine what the situation is.

### Retail Environments

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.

### Confidential Information

- > Adopt a 'clean desk' philosophy, store information in drawers and cabinets that are locked
- > Make sure soft copy electronic files, information and media are backed up and properly stored. Make sure electronic equipment is placed in a temperature controlled environment.

### Life Safety and Emergencies

Today's buildings have complex life safety systems. They are designed to provide early detection of hazards from fire. They offer voice communication for the effective evacuation and relaying of instructions to building occupants.

Evacuation plans are in place to ensure you are safe in the event of an emergency. Most facilities have documented plans available to all. As an occupant of any building it is prudent for you to know the plan, your role in it and how to evacuate the building in more than one way.

### 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.
- > Include crime prevention information in your staff memos and newsletters, customer statements and notices.
- > 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.
- > Bring the problems of business security, shop-lifting, vandalism, etc. to the attention of community leaders. Start a "Business Watch" to prevent crime.

### Additional Resources

Security Preparedness:

[www.getprepared.ca](http://www.getprepared.ca)

[www.ccep.ca](http://www.ccep.ca) (Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness)

[www.gov.on.ca/EMO/](http://www.gov.on.ca/EMO/)

[www.disasterecovery.org](http://www.disasterecovery.org)

Security Awareness:

[www.tbs-sct.gc.a](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.a)