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Commercial Burglary Prevention Tips



Since the COVID19 lockdown, many of our businesses are closed, leaving your business and property vulnerable to burglars. Unfortunately, there are some unscrupulous individuals who will take advantage of this situation to burglarize our neighborhood businesses. Due to the pandemic, a street that was once bustling with customers is now empty and quiet.

Recently, there have been a significant increase in burglaries in our business districts. In these incidents individuals would enter by breaking into front doors, windows, back doors, basement walls and rooftop openings. Too often these types of crimes could have been avoided if the business owner was aware of the tips we have listed below. Additionally, business owners can contact their local precinct and an officer will come and evaluate your security system and give suggestions as to what you should do to secure the property.



Add deadbolt locks. All entrances you do not normally use to enter the location should have a deadbolt lock.

Look at your entry points. Do not make it easy for a person to enter through skylights, rear and basement windows. Block entrances with heavy items that are difficult to move or unpleasant for a burglar.



Increase lighting! Darkness and seclusion creates a perfect environment for a burglary. Burglars can break in and find items of value without being seen, and cameras have a harder time capturing their movements even with night vision. Consider leaving some lights on inside the property. Ensure that all possible means of entry, both inside and out, are illuminated.

Add security cameras. Security systems with new technology can alert you when there is movement on the premises by email. An affordable alternative is to set up an old smartphone as a do-it-yourself video surveillance device. There are a number of apps that allow you to do this as long as you have wifi or internet service. It costs little to nothing, and some of the systems can record video upon certain trigger events, such as motion or noise.



Band together. Organize with other businesses to conduct patrols randomly during the nighttime hours when burglaries are most likely to occur. Form or join a group of your local business owners. As a group you can successfully protect your properties. Pool resources to have cameras installed, monitored, and recorded.

Avoid "Smash and Grab." These crimes of opportunity happen when a passerby sees something easily stolen of value in a store display or close to the door. We can discourage these events by removing all valuable items from store window displays and other areas easily visible from the street. Reinforce front glass with adhesive films that make entry difficult even though the glass is broken.



Remove all financial records and money from the business. This includes checkbooks, bank records, and other important business records. If that is not possible, invest in a safe. If these are stolen, it can lead to identity theft and fraud.

Be conspicuous about your efforts to thwart burglars. If they know you are trying to catch them, they may choose another business that is an easier target. Don't forget to change security codes and locks often, especially if you are changing staff members.



What to do if your business has been burglarized:

- **Call 911** and wait for law enforcement outside. The position of items may be very important.
- **Do not clean up and avoid touching anything!** Obtain clearance from the police first. Cleaning up and moving damaged goods will wipe away fingerprints or DNA, destroying evidence.
- **Collect your own evidence.** Document all damage and affected areas with photos and videos.
- **Check your inventory.** Keep good records. Not only is this a good business practice but will help in case of a burglary. It will help with both for prosecution and insurance purposes.
- **Save and download all video feeds** for the last few days. It is possible that the burglars may have visited the location before the burglary. Make sure to provide the video to the police and the District Attorney's office.
- **Notify all employees.** Inquire if they are aware of anything that happened at the business, and note if they are acting suspiciously.
- **Speak to your neighbors.** The best security system is a local "Neighborhood Watch." The neighboring businesses may have seen or heard something, even if they a block away.
- **Cooperate with police and the District Attorney's office.** All information is important to track possible connections in trends, this will lead to finding the responsible parties for crimes.