

Commercial Burglary Prevention

Businesses are four times as apt to be burglarized as homes, and small businesses are targets in over half of the commercial burglaries committed.

These statistics emphasize the fact that your business must be made as burglar-resistant as possible. There are many measures you can take to make it clear to potential burglars that your business is no place to do their business!

Follow as many as possible of the preventive measures discussed on the following pages.

Preventive Measures – The Exterior

Adequately light all exterior sides of your business (including alleyways) and the parking lot, using vandal-resistant fixtures. As most store burglaries occur at night when it's dark, lighting serves as one of the most important deterrents. Install an alarm system and check it regularly for failure.

Post conspicuously a notice that shows you have an alarm. Reinforce doors with long screws or bolts on heavy-duty strike plates, pop out proof hinges, or hole/nail combo at top and bottom. Replace all hollow-core doors. Issue as few keys as possible and change the locks if keys are lost or not returned by a former employee. Do not tag keys with the name of your business. Keep a log of the keys you issue. Secure all roof openings, air ducts, skylights, air conditioning units, hatchways, doorway transoms, sidewalk and basement openings. Do not provide concealment or climbing platforms for the burglar. Clear and maintain all debris, weeds, and shrubbery away from windows and doors. Lock up ladders and tools that could make a burglar's job easier. Protect windows and glass doors with transparent window film, security glazing, or roll down security panels; or install burglar-resistant glass. Use bars or grating on rear and side windows.

PLEASE NOTE: To comply with fire safety ordinances for door and window security, consult the fire department.

Preventive Measures – The Interior

Keep a minimum of cash on the premises. Leave cash registers empty and open after hours. Move valuable merchandise and business equipment such as computers away from the windows or doors to prevent smash and grab thefts. Make it difficult to steal merchandise by alternating the direction of hangers on racks, tying appliance cords together, chaining bicycles together, lock up small valuables in cabinets and showcases.

Arrange window displays so that passerby's and police are able to see into the store.

Anchor your safe to a well-lit, highly visible location. Keep all valuable documents and items, including company vehicle keys, in a safe. Always leave an interior light that is visible from the street on. If for any reason it is off, the darkened store will arouse suspicion.

Finally, do not lock a burglar inside when you leave. Inspect all closets, bathrooms, and other hiding places before closing. For personal safety, try to have two people present at both opening and closing. If you suspect that your business has been burglarized, call the police immediately. Do not try to enter the premises – the burglar may still be inside. Do not disturb any evidence.