



Shaping the Conversation for Safer Communities

Crime Prevention Week - November 1st to 7th, 2015

Crime Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility

Robbery Prevention

Robbery is a crime of violence that involves theft of property using threat of force or violence. This can be visible or implied – with or without a weapon. Perpetrators believe the profit they may gain from committing a robbery is worth the risks involved.

While it may not be possible to prevent a personal robbery, there are ways to minimize the risks.

Tips for Individuals

- Plan ahead, and let someone know where you are going and for how long. Pick safe routes to your destination. If you are walking after dark, take routes that are well lit and are well populated. If you are using Transit, stand or ride near others - do not become isolated. If driving, avoid parking in an isolated area - park in well-lit, highly-visible, high-traffic areas. Keep your vehicle well maintained.
- Demonstrate confidence when walking. Keep your head up. Be aware of surroundings. Be aware of suspicious activities or individuals. Do not engage unknown person(s) who may approach. If you suspect you are being followed, switch directions or cross the street. If the person continues to follow you, move quickly toward an open store lighted area. Do not be afraid to yell for help.
- If carrying small personal electronics, like an iPod, conceal it under your clothes. These may be targets for would-be thieves who can easily sell or exchange the device.

If You are Robbed

- Stay calm. Do not make sudden movements to upset the offender. Follow the Robber's demands, but not volunteer more than he asks for. Do not be a hero - life is worth more than money or belongings.
- Try to get a good look at the Robber. Make mental notes of race, age, sex, height, weight, hair, eye color, build, and clothing. Note anything unusual, such as scars, tattoos, strange mannerisms or speech patterns. Note the type, size and color of any weapon used.
- Give the Robber time to leave before calling for help. Note the direction of they went when leaving. If they leave in a vehicle, try to get a description of the vehicle, without putting yourself in harm's way.
- Report personal robbery, or any suspicious persons, vehicles, or activities to police as soon as possible.

Robbery Prevention & Awareness for Businesses

In many retail businesses, front-line employees may be at risk of violent incidents on a regular basis. Reasons for this include the public having free and easy access to the store. Employees frequently need to deal with people they do not know. Some retail businesses typically keep cash on hand, display tempting merchandise, and remain open for extended hours.

Knowing the opportunity for risk that many businesses face, retailers should have specific plans for their stores to help protect employees and minimize potential for violence. Retailers can reduce potential for workplace violence by implementing a combination of physical control measures.



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Robbery Prevention & Awareness for Businesses cont...

Physical controls

Store design and security devices are referred to as physical controls. Physical controls may include the following:

- Maintain the property - A rundown business or building may attract criminals, ensure building landscaping, the sidewalks and the parking areas are all clean and well-maintained. Do not keep old or damaged displays, posters or signs.
- Clear sight-lines both inside and outside the store. Low shelves ensure a good view within the store, making it more difficult for thieves to hide. Do not use large displays or posters that would cover the windows. Effective lighting inside and outside increases visibility.
- Position the sales counter near a window so employees can see out and the public can see in. Incorporate barriers such as wider counters or Plexiglas partitions that separate the employees from the customers. Having the sales counter on a raised floor allows clear views of the entire store.
- Product placement can discourage shoplifting. Place expensive items behind the counter or in locked display.
- A safe with a time lock to store cash and other valuables. Signage advertising "Cash in time-lock safe".
- Clearly mark public and private areas and make private areas hard to access for non-employees.
- Visible security cameras deter individuals and record activities.
- Communication devices for employees to summon help in an emergency include panic buttons or personal alarms, and cell phones. Door chimes that alert employees when someone has entered the store.

Procedural controls

Procedural controls include training on "safe work" procedures, and scheduling. Written procedures do not need to be complicated; they should focus on minimizing the risk for employees.

Opening and closing the store, handling money, and working alone, carry a greater threat of violence. Robbers do not want to be identified. Encourage employees to make eye contact and greet everyone who enters the store.

Employees may be distracted by opening and closing procedures and activities, schedule employees to work in pairs during these periods.

If your Business Robbed:

- Play it safe. Do not be a hero. If a weapon cannot be seen, assume that there is one. Cooperate; give up money and do not resist. Try to handle the entire situation as if it were a normal transaction.
- Stay calm and cautiously observe as much as possible about the Robber. Avoid surprises, keep your hands in sight and do not make any sudden moves. Inform the Robber if you have to reach for something.
- Do not lock the door to keep the Robber from leaving. Activate the alarm or call 9-1-1. Do not chase or follow the robber.

Additional Information:

- WorkSafe BC: www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/



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