

# BUSINESS CRIME WATCH

BAY CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

NOVEMBER 2017

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## PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

A packed store can be great for business, but it also provides prime conditions for accidents and theft to occur that can spoil the holiday cheer. Preparing for the holiday rush can help your business to have a safe and successful holiday season.



**Plan for Success.** Consider collaborating with local law enforcement for ideas about security. Unlike giant retailers, small businesses do not have a bottomless pit of inventory. Small businesses should be reminded just how important it is to protect their inventory and supplies from burglaries during the holiday season. Make sure your store's security system is operating properly.

**Manage crowds with care.** Plan for and implement adequate crowd-control to properly manage the increased number of shoppers.

**Maintain vigilance.** Remember to be vigilant in understanding the crowds and their temperament. Address conflicts early and do not hesitate to contact the Bay City Department of Public Safety if an argument begins to escalate.

**Be aware of overworked employees.** During the holiday season, it is easy for employees to become overworked. Be aware of the injuries your employees may face. The most costly workplace injuries are those that are not anticipated. Employee injuries like slips, trips and falls can occur when there is unnecessary clutter in the store. Repetitive motion injuries can occur as a result of employees' constantly having to restock shelves and clean up behind shoppers.

**Prevent store entrance chaos.** Consider developing "time specific entrance passes" designed to allow shoppers to enter your store at a specific time. This can help ensure an organized and safe entry into your business.

**Be aware of "intense" shoppers.** Customers are a business' lifeblood. However, be aware that some customers take the Black Friday shopping experience to another level. Black Friday sales have triggered trampling deaths, serious fights and property damage. If a customer in your store is injured, you and your business could end up in a serious lawsuit.

**Consider product placement.** Instead of stacking store items high upon shelves, consider handing out vouchers. This will help mitigate in-store accidents, crowding on shelves and shopper aggression.

**Keep a clean store.** Large crowds will create an even larger mess for retailers. Store merchandise and spilled liquids left on the floor can create a safety hazard for shoppers and a liability for businesses. Monitor your store throughout the day and make sure clean-up is a top priority.

**Prepare your parking.** Make sure your parking lot / area is equipped with adequate lighting and security. Consider having a store worker escort shoppers to their vehicles.

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## Crowd Management Safety Guidelines for Retailers

*Crowd related injuries can occur during special sales and promotional events.*

Under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970*, employers are responsible for providing their workers with safe and healthy workplaces. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) encourages employers to adopt effective safety and health management systems to identify and eliminate work-related hazards, including those caused by large crowds at retail sales events

OSHA has prepared these guidelines to help employers and store owners avoid injuries during the holiday shopping season, or other events where large crowds may gather. Crowd management planning should begin in advance of events that are likely to draw large crowds, and crowd management, pre-event setup, and emergency situation management should be part of event planning. OSHA recommends that employers planning a large shopping event adopt a plan that includes the following elements.

### *Planning*

- Where large crowds are expected, hire additional staff as needed and have trained security or crowd management personnel or police officers on site.
- Create a detailed staffing plan that designates a location for each worker. Based on the size of the crowd expected, determine the number of workers that are needed in various locations to ensure the safety of the event (e.g., near the door entrances and throughout the store).
- Ensure that workers are properly trained to manage the event.
- Contact local fire and police agencies to determine if the event site meets all public safety requirements, and ensure that all permits and licenses are obtained and that local emergency services, including the local police, fire department and hospital, are aware of the event.
- Designate a worker to contact local emergency responders if necessary.
- Designate a store manager to make key decisions as needed during the event
- Provide legible and visible signs that describe entrance and exit locations, store opening times, and other important information such as the location of major sale items and restrooms.
- Prepare an emergency plan that addresses potential dangers facing workers, including overcrowding, crowd crushing, being struck by the crowd, violent acts and fire. Share emergency plan with all local public safety agencies.
- Train workers in crowd management procedures and the emergency plan. Provide them with an opportunity to practice the special event plan. Include local public safety agencies if appropriate.

### *Pre-Event Setup:*

- Set up barricades or rope lines for crowd management well in advance of customers arriving at the store.
- Make sure that barricades are set up so that the customers' line does not start right at the entrance to the store. This will allow for orderly crowd management entry and make it possible to divide crowds into small groups for the purpose of controlling entrance.

- Ensure that barricade lines have an adequate number of breaks and turns at regular intervals to reduce the risk of customers pushing from the rear and possibly crushing others, including workers.
- Designate workers to explain approach and entrance procedures to the arriving public, and direct them to lines or entrances.
- Make sure that outside personnel have radios or some other way to communicate with personnel inside the store and emergency responders.
- Consider using mechanisms such as numbered wristbands or tickets to provide the earlier arriving customers with first access to sale items.
- Consider using Internet lottery for "hot" items.
- Locate sale items in different parts of the store to prevent overcrowding in one place.
- Locate shopping carts and other potential obstacles or projectiles inside the store and away from the entrance, not in the parking lot.
- If appropriate, provide public amenities including toilets, washbasins, water and shelter.
- Communicate updated information to customers waiting in line. Have signs and distribute pamphlets showing the location of entrances and exits, store opening times and location of special sales items within the store.
- Shortly before opening, remind waiting crowds of the entrance process (i.e., limiting entry to small groups, redemption of numbered tickets, etc.).

#### *During the Sales Event:*

- Provide a separate store entrance for staff. Provide door monitors there to prevent crowd entry.
- Make sure that all employees and crowd control personnel are aware that the doors are about to open.
- Staff entrances with uniformed guards, police or other authorized personnel.
- Use a public address system or bullhorns to manage the entering crowd and to communicate information or problems.
- Position security or crowd managers to the sides of entering (or exiting) public, not in the center of their path.
- Provide crowd and entry management measures at all entrances, including the ones not being used. If possible, use more than one entrance.
- When the store reaches maximum occupancy, do not allow additional customers to enter until the occupancy level drops.
- Provide a safe entrance for people with disabilities.

#### *Emergency Situations:*

- Do not restrict egress, and do not block or lock exit doors
- Know in advance who to call for emergency medical response.
- Keep first-aid kits and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) available, and have personnel trained in using AEDs and CPR onsite.
- Instruct employees, in the event of an emergency, to follow instructions from authorized first responders, regardless of company rules.

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### ***Bay City Ordinance- Removal of unauthorized vehicles from private property parking lots***

Your business parking lot is used to accommodate the vehicles of your patrons and employees. They are an incredible asset to your business and should be properly posted. Sometimes, unauthorized vehicles are parked in private property parking lots. Under the Michigan Vehicle Code 257.252k, an owner or lessor of private real property shall post a notice that meets **all** the following requirements before authorizing the towing or removal of a vehicle from the real property without the consent of the owner or other person who is legally entitled to possess the vehicle:

- (a) The notice shall be prominently displayed at each point of entry for vehicular access to the real property. If the real property lacks curbs or access barriers, not less than 1 notice shall be posted for each 100 feet of road frontage.
- (b) The notice clearly indicates in letters not less than 2 inches high on a contrasting background that unauthorized vehicles will be towed away at the owner's expense.
- (c) The notice provides the name and telephone number of the towing service responsible for towing or removing vehicles from that property.
- (d) The notice is permanently installed with the bottom of the notice located not less than 4 feet from the ground and is continuously maintained on the property for not less than 24 hours before a vehicle is towed or removed.

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### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

- **Columbus Avenue Management Board** November 7, 2017, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM @ Conference Room 306
  - **Historic District Commission** November 8, 2017, 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM @ Commission Chambers
  - **Zoning Board of Appeals** November 14, 2017, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM @ Commission Chambers
  - **Columbus Avenue Citizens District Council** November 15, 2017, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM @ Conference Room 306
  - **Northwest Citizens District Council** November 15, 2017, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM @ Linsday Elementary School
  - **Planning Commission** November 15, 2017, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM @ Commission Chambers
  - **Midland Salzburg Citizens District Council** November 16, 2017, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM @ Bay County Community Center
  - **Southend Citizens District Council** November 16, 2017, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM @ Bay County Child & Senior Citizens Center
  - **Northeast Citizen's District Council** November 22, 2017, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM @ Conference Room 306
  - **Midland Street Management Board** November 23, 2017, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM @ VNO Wine Warehouse
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## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE**

During the month of October the Bay City Department of Public Safety handled the following calls:

- Responded to or self-initiated 1860 law enforcement related incidents
- Made 251 traffic stops
- Wrote 316 reports
- Took 80 traffic crash reports

For more information on what is happening in your neighborhood, go to [www.crimemapping.com](http://www.crimemapping.com)

10/4- An east side business reported an embezzlement complaint. The complaint is still under investigation.

10/08- An armed robbery occurred at an east side convenience store. The suspect is described as a white female, with blonde hair, approx. 5'05" and around 125lbs. The suspect displayed a handgun during the robbery. The security video of the incident has been released and is current on the department's Facebook page.

10/22- A retail fraud complaint from an east side clothing store. There were three suspects involved in the crime. Two of the suspects took off before the police arrived, but were later located, identified and the stolen property was returned to the store. The report has been turned over to the prosecutor's office.

10/26- A malicious destruction of property complaint was taken at an east side business where the suspects drove recklessly through the businesses newly refinished parking lot. The suspects and their vehicle was identified through the use of the BCDPS trail camera which was previously installed at the location. The suspects gave a full confession and charges are pending.

10/27- A retail fraud complaint from an east side gas station. The suspect is a known customer. The complaint is still under investigation.

