

BUSINESS CRIME WATCH

BAY CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY March 2018 EDITION 3, VOLUME 3

Spring Crime Prevention for Business Owners

As the warmer weather and spring are quickly coming upon us, it's time to start planning for cleanup! The warmer weather brings with it an increase in activity with more people walking around especially after hours and at night. We have consistently seen a spike in criminal activity each year when the warmer weather of spring begins. To help prevent you from being a victim, here are some helpful safety and security tips.

Spring Cleaning

Owners and managers should periodically look around the store or office to remove clutter.

Windows need to remain clear. Avoid piling boxes or inventory against windows and exits. Posters and advertisements need to be below windows. Remember, if an employee can't see out, customers and police can't see in. Clean and clutter-free windows and exits can safeguard your business against a robbery. Move boxes to a safe area, out of the way of employees and customers. No one wants injuries and lawsuits.

Review these safety issues with employees, especially those who have been recently hired.

- Stay alert to shoplifters and vendors who may have light fingers with your stock.
- Don't become lax with security on slow days and nights.
- Keep at least two people on duty. It's easier for a criminal to get away with the contents of the register or safe when only one person is working.
- Use digital cameras to capture criminal activity. Digital cameras provide a much clearer image.
- Close all trash bins and locate them away from the building. There are some people who love the look, smell, and excitement of a fire. Also, that trash bin or dumpster could be used as a ladder to enter your store or office through the roof.
- Test all locks, grates, doors and windows to make sure they lock properly and are in working order.

Burglars Shun Good Locks and Lighting

Heavy duty locks and latches are only part of what it takes to help your business prevent being broken into. Steel doors and steel door frames or enhanced strike plates provide added levels of security for any home or business. They help deter criminals because they take longer to try to force entry through them.

An example that follows is a lock often used on tractor trailer doors, but homeowners and businesses use them on storage sheds and other structures easily accessed from the outside.



Hidden Shackle Locks

They can be purchased at home improvement and hardware stores. The locks are effective because there is no real practical way to cut the lock with bolt cutters. Also, prying them out of the door is time consuming and noisy. The core of the lock is set into the lock. They can be purchased at home improvement and hardware stores for a minimal investment of about \$40.

Lighting

Burglars like to work in the dark. Ensure that you have good quality lighting near all entrances. With the price of LED lighting and bulbs dropping, they are now affordable and provide a financial savings over time with lower energy use. Now is a great time of year to check all lighting to make sure it's working properly. Considering it's before daylight savings time and it still gets dark fairly early, it's a convenient time to double check all after hours lighting.

No one can prevent crime, but specialized locks and good lighting are deterrents for would-be thieves.

Hiring Employees

With spring and summer approaching, it's a great time to start thinking about hiring the extra people needed for longer hours and more customers. Be mindful of a few things during the hiring process. Stick to these steps.

- Never hire anyone on the spot.
- Conduct a thorough interview.
- Tell the prospective applicant what your company is all about and what is expected of all employees.
- Inform the person of the strict zero-tolerance drug rules. As a potential employer, have the person take a drug test. If the applicant has trouble with that part of the hiring process, conclude the interview. The person in question may object to the testing on principal, but it may be the reluctant applicant has a problem with substance abuse.
- Always follow through and check the references listed on the resume. References are helpful when judging a potential candidate. Don't look for just the negative ones, but also the positive ones. One bad decision doesn't mean the applicant is wrong for the job.
- Does the potential employee have a record of jumping from job to job? Unless the person has had some physical problems, missing work is usually a red flag for problems on and off the job.

Stay Alert: Help Neighborhood Merchants

Better lighting, locks and other devices to keep out thieves can help prevent you from becoming a victim. However, there is one deterrent to burglary that often goes unnoticed - the unsuspecting witness - the casual passerby.

Who are these witnesses? They are the drivers or pedestrians who are out late at night and see something that is out of the ordinary. You might be the one who notices a car or truck parked in the back of the store or office that does not belong there late at night when the store is closed. It might be a light on when it should be dark inside. Your quick action might mean the end to a series of burglaries that are occurring in your area.

Call 911 if you notice anything out of the ordinary. Your call and concern might help a local retailer stay in business.

Business Emergency Contact Info

Every day and night officers respond to calls for service to businesses that are currently closed. Many times these officers need to contact a representative of the business for additional information related to these calls for service. In particular if a business has been broken into or has sustained damage, we need to notify someone of what's happened and to help secure the business.

Central Dispatch (911) maintains a list of all businesses in the county and their 24-hour contact information. If you need an emergency contact information sheet for your business, please contact us in community policing at (989) 892-5900, or email us at communitypolicing@baycitymi.org

This information is critical to the safety and security of your business.

February Activity:

02/13 - Retail fraud complaint at a south end convenience store. Cigarettes were stolen. A description of the suspect and suspect vehicle were given to responding officers. The suspect vehicle was stopped nearby with one suspect being apprehended immediately. Two other suspects fled on foot and were located nearby after following their tracks in the snow. All three were arrested and lodged.

02/25 – Retail fraud complaint at a south end store. Alcohol was stolen by a white female suspect. A vehicle plate number (out of Saginaw) was obtained by a witness and the case is under investigation.

We have had a number of burglaries of area bars that have increased over the past month. The suspect(s) are forcibly entering the bar after hours when closed, then breaking into cash registers/cabinets and stealing any cash they find. These incidents are all currently under investigation.

There have been a number of larceny from auto's throughout Bay City. An overwhelming majority of these occur do to a failure to lock or properly secure their vehicle. The incidence of these increase as more seasonable weather approaches in the coming months. Please remember to lock your vehicle anytime it is unoccupied. We strongly encourage people to remove items of value from view as well, in particular electronics and purses/handbags.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

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

- Responded to or self-initiated 1649 law enforcement related incidents
- Made 326 traffic stops
- Wrote 217 reports
- Took 49 traffic crash reports

For more information on what is happening in your neighborhood, go to www.crimemapping.com



Upcoming Community Events

April 21ST- Clean-Up Bay City

This event is a city wide Earth Day clean up and recycling event. From 8:30am – 2pm at Bay City DPW, you can drop off large items in the dumpsters, recycle polystyrene, tires, electronic waste, metal scrap, household goods, building materials, eye glasses and hearing supplies, cell phones, concrete/bricks, shred paper and more. The location is 900 S. Water Street. Free compost will also be located in Vet's Park.

April 28th- National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

This event will take place from 10am – 2pm in the lobby of the Law Enforcement Center, 501 3rd Street, Bay City. You can anonymously drop off prescription drugs in pill form. We do not accept liquids, inhalers, needles or syringes.



SAVE THE DATE



**Tuesday August 7th
5pm – 8pm**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS TO JOIN US FOR



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME

This year's event will be held at
1 East Main Street in Uptown Bay City

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW