

### **Some suggestions:**

#### **During**

- COOPERATE! Do as you are told
- Do not resist in any way
- Do not talk or ask questions
- Use your alarm ONLY if you can do so safely -- keep hands in sight
- Do not stare -- but observe robbers physical appearance

#### **After**

- Activate silent alarm or call 911
- Do not let anyone in or out until police arrive -- lock door if necessary
- Remove person who has been robbed to a quiet place
- Preserve the crime scene -- Do not touch anything
- Have all witnesses independently write down suspect(s) description

### **I**s a video camera a good deterrent for crime?

Video cameras can be an important addition to your overall security plan, and can be effective for criminal identification, but they should not be your sole source of security.

To maintain the effectiveness of surveillance cameras you should make sure to change recording tapes regularly and test the image quality to ensure clarity.

A video surveillance system is a sizeable investment and should be researched thoroughly. Be an informed shopper; do your homework, ask for references and compare prices before you purchase a video surveillance system.

### **W**hat about false cameras?

Some people feel that a false camera is a useful deterrent because the presence of a camera implies that activity is being monitored. Others believe that false cameras give a false sense of security and can leave you susceptible to lawsuits by innocent bystanders who assume the protection of surveillance.

There is a popular belief that video surveillance cameras provide such poor images that they fail to provide a description of the criminal. Even an obviously functioning system does not threaten some criminals.

If you do choose to install a false camera, make sure it looks real. Keep it pointed in the right direction, plugged in, and dusted. Even false camera systems can be a sizeable investment, so again do your homework prior to purchasing any system.

**Mesa Police Department**  
**(480) 644-2300**  
**[www.mesaaz.gov/police](http://www.mesaaz.gov/police)**



# **BUSINESSES**

## I am thinking about buying an alarm system. What should I look for?

Prior to purchasing an alarm system assess your needs. Are you interested in a burglar alarm? Hold-up alarm? Panic alarm? All three? Consider the protection of valuables, vulnerable entry points, etc. Make sure to get estimates from several security companies and request references. Ask some basic questions including:

- Does the system meet Underwriters Laboratory standards?
- Is the system designed to fully protect vulnerable areas?
- Is the system monitored? Locally?

If you purchase an alarm system there are important steps you need to take to ensure the system performs its proper function.

- Is your system tested regularly?
- Back-up batteries inspected annually?
- Do you have an alarm permit?
- Is current responder information on file with the Mesa Police Department?
- Does a designated responder respond to every alarm to check it out?

If you are considering an alarm or have recently purchased one, we encourage you to attend False Alarm School, sponsored by Mesa Police Communications. To find out more call (480) 644-2699.

An alarm system can be a sizable investment for any business. Be an informed shopper and search for the system that will meet your needs.

## I have an alarm system. I shouldn't have to worry about security, right?

Unfortunately, the security provided by alarm systems is often overestimated by business owners while overall environmental deterrence measures are overlooked.

When combined with an effective defensive environmental design, an alarm system can enhance your security. Look over your property and assess your physical security. Consider these things:

- The property should be uniformly lit
- Lights are well maintained
- All trees trimmed up 7 foot
- All shrubs kept below 3 foot
- Windows should be free of posters or advertisements
- Leave interior light on after hours
- Keep property clean and free of debris and graffiti

## What about Armed Robbery and Shoplifting? Is there anything that can be done to prevent these crimes from coming into my store?

While no crime prevention idea or program is "crime-proof" there are definitely steps that you can take to make your business less vulnerable. The best suggestion is to make it physically uncomfortable for a criminal and follow up with really good customer service.

Beginning with the physical environment, you want to increase visibility over the entire store. Look at your store from the criminal perspective and consider:

- Can you enter the store without being seen?

- How tall are the shelves?
- Are there hidden corners?
- Are the windows covered with advertisements?

Next, look at access. Ideally you want controlled access into the store, including rear entry points, and within the store, i.e., dressing rooms, offices, storage space. Don't be afraid to state rules --

**NO ADMITTANCE  
See clerk for assistance  
Shoplifters will be prosecuted**

-- and enforce them when they are broken.

Good customer service is an excellent deterrent. Educate your employees to greet and make eye contact with each customer who enters the business. This friendly environment makes customers feel important and welcome. It also lets would-be criminals know that they have been noticed and that their behavior is being monitored by employees.

Develop prevention policies and enforce them. Educate employees on recognizing and reporting suspicious activity. Encourage them to remain aware... *awareness* is the KEY to prevention.

## What do I do if someone tries to rob my business?

The Mesa Police Department encourages all businesses to develop an armed robbery policy and educate employees on this policy. This policy should address behavior during and after a robbery. After an incident, review and revise the store policy as necessary.