

Protecting Your Business From Burglaries

One of the most effective ways to reduce the chance of a business being burglarized is through the "Layers of Protection" approach, using more than one prevention method. Some of the "layers" of prevention are:

Alarms

Alarm the business with audible, monitored systems. Make sure the interior of the business uses a motion detector for the alarm. Be sure to have the alarm company educate all employees on the proper use, arming and disarming of the alarm system. This is especially important for employees that open and close the business. The added education will help reduce false alarms.

Video Surveillance

When choosing a video surveillance system for a business, be sure to pick a high quality digital system. If possible, it is best to have the monitoring and recording equipment located off site. Many times, burglars will seek out this equipment and steal it as well, leaving no evidence to identify them. Post notices that you do not have the monitoring system on site. Choose a system that allows plenty of cameras, both inside and outside of the business, if possible. Check the equipment often to make sure that there is plenty of memory left. If using a VHS tape, replace it often with a new tape.

Light

Lighting and good visibility are the best protection against becoming a victim of burglary. Well lit, open spaces and uncluttered windows provide no place for a burglar to hide. For exterior areas, use a dusk to dawn timer to make sure lights are on all night. A softly lit interior will make it easier for officers driving by to check for any unwanted, after-hours guests too! Leaving the cash register open, empty, and visible from outside removes the promise of "fast cash". Valuables, including laptops, cell phones, etc., should not be left in plain site. Strategically locate displays to hide the most valuable items.

Use Layers of Protection

Locks

Lights

Alarms

Video Surveillance

Key Control

Safes

Gates

Fences

Landscaping

Access Control

Security Patrol

Security Doors

Window Locks

Inventory Records

Employee Education

Mesa Police Department



BURGLARY PREVENTION FOR BUSINESSES

COMMON BUSINESS BURGLARY AND SMASH & GRAB BURGLARY

Mesa Police Department

Crime Prevention Officers

130 N. Robson ~ Mesa, AZ 85201

Phone: (480) 644-2300

www.mesaaz.gov/police

Brought to you by:
Mesa Police Department
Crime Prevention Officers



Common Business Burglary Methods

Many burglars are very experienced at what they do for a living. Sad but true, you probably have burglars visit your business more often than you know. They are shopping now to steal later. In addition, they are looking at the inside for the best means of getting in after the front door is locked. Some of the ways they gain access to businesses are:



Waiting for Closing Time!

~ **Exterior Doors**—Prying open door locks.

Prevention Tip: Install metal guards around the deadbolt locks to protect against prying type instruments, such as crowbars, from forcing open the locks.

~ **Adjoining Walls**—Breaking into an adjoining business that may not have an alarm and create a hole in the wall to crawl through to the business next door.

Prevention Tip: Reinforce common walls. Reinforcing materials such as steel reinforced concrete would provide the greatest protection. Make it much more difficult and time consuming to gain entry by simply installing cabinets with reinforced backing or heavy metal shelving units affixed to the wall. Put heavy items on the bottom shelves that will make them difficult to slide away from the wall and harder to tip over.

~ **Roof Access**—Using fire escape ladders, downspouts, and other means to gain access to the roof, then going into the building through vents or holes they create.

Prevention Tip: Secure ladders and other roof access means when not in use. Downspouts should be a part of the building, not attached to it.

~ **Removing Windows**—Removing glass panes from the window, or entire windows from the wall, door or track.

Prevention Tip: Install security laminate on the glass and an adhesive sealant around inside and outside edges up to the frame of the window casings and trim. Secure sliding windows and doors with locks and a screw inside the track to prevent lifting and removing the window.

Smash & Grab Burglary

Another type of burglary is known as the “Smash & Grab” burglary. Burglars are smashing a window to grab valuables and/or gain quick access to office buildings. They are often using the most available tool... the landscaping! Large river rocks, bricks, etc. are often readily available.



Target #1: Businesses with office equipment, such as computers, printers, closed cash registers, etc. located near doors and windows that are visible from the outside.

Target #2: Medical and Dental offices that may have computer equipment as well as prescription drug samples on the premises.



Prescription Drugs are in high demand.

Target #3: Small businesses located in smaller professional centers and strip malls. Many of these types of businesses keep small amounts of cash or other valuables on the premises.



Target #4: Retail businesses that are not open 24/7 and usually have small amounts of cash kept in cash registers located near the entrance or exit.

Prevention Tips: Revise landscaping to remove the “tools”, anything that can be used as a projectile through a window. Install security laminate film of at least 14 ml thickness to reinforce all exterior door and window glass in the business. With a tensile strength of approximately 28,000 psi and breakage at 350 psi, these products can protect against entry by glass breakage. Leave cash registers open and empty with the cash drawer propped up in the tray at closing time.

A Few More Tips:

~ Keep a record of all keys and who has each one. Make sure keys have “Do Not Duplicate” on them. Keep extra keys locked up.

~ Paint the business address in large, reflective numbers on the roof of the building so Police helicopters can find and verify the location quickly. For specifications go to our website at: <http://cityofmesa.org/police/skyview.aspx>

~ Make sure the address is clearly visible on the front of the building from the street and back of the building if there is an alley or back parking lot.

~ Skylights, vents, air ducts, and crawl spaces should be secured and included in the alarm system.

~ Keep a current inventory list of all office equipment with the make, model and serial number of each item. Engrave an identification number on items that do not have a serial number. (Note: Do Not use a Social Security number!) Keep list in a safe and secure location. Keep an additional copy of the list off site.

~ Anchor safes securely to the floor

~ If a business appears to have been burglarized, DO NOT enter the building or allow anyone to touch anything. A burglar could still be on scene. Stay a safe distance away, preferably in a locked vehicle where the door can still be seen and call Police. DO NOT disturb any evidence!

For More Prevention Tips & Information, contact:

Mesa Police Department

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