

Reducing Theft at Construction Sites

The losses due to theft and vandalism on construction sites have been increasing dramatically over the past decade. Although exact figures are not available, all reliable estimates are that losses due to theft and vandalism are in the billions of dollars.

Crime prevention on construction sites has become a major concern of all responsible contractors. In some cases, the difference between making a profit or sustaining a loss on a job will relate to the contractor's ability to control crime problems on the site.

This handout provides guidance on efforts to control job site security. While each site will present some unique situations, the information provided can assist in identifying major sources of crime losses and implementing the measures for controlling these losses.

General

- Establish a written Security Policy.
- Develop a job-site security plan.
- Assign supervisory security responsibilities.
- Encourage security awareness among all workers.
- Contact the police and fire departments before starting a job.
- Establish contact with adjoining properties
 - Encourage them to report suspicious activities on the site.
- Require prompt reporting by workers of incidents of theft and vandalism.
- Report all losses to the police immediately.
- Maintain complete records of all security incidents.
- Become involved with local groups or associations working to prevent construction-site theft and vandalism.

Site

- When possible, enclose the job site with a security fence.
- Provide for nighttime lighting of the site.
- Provide for limited access to the site at all times, preferably with lockable gates.
- Maintain a clear zone adjacent to fencing.
- Post warning signs to keep unauthorized persons off the site.
- Use only high quality locks - never leave keys in locks, or leave locks in an open position.

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- Check-out the site at the end of each day before securing it.
- Provide parking areas outside of the site for employees and visitors.
- Consider the use of security guards and have them patrol the site on designated rounds.
- Provide guards with a means of communication.

Equipment, Tools, and Materials

- Consider utilizing a secured area within the site for equipment storage.
- Maintain an inventory control system for all equipment, tools, and materials. Include photographs of equipment and expensive tools. Establish a program for verifying all deliveries.
- Mark all tools and equipment in a conspicuous, distinctive manner to allow for easy identification.
- Implement a check-out system for all tools and equipment. Post a sign stating, "ATTENTION! ALL TOOLS MUST BE SIGNED OUT."
- Keep tools securely locked in storage trailers or sheds.
- Stamp all heavy equipment and attachments with an ID number. Provide warning signs on equipment indicating that ID Numbers are recorded.
- Establish a supervisory key-control program for motorized equipment.
- Lock all equipment cabs during nonworking hours.
- Immobilize equipment by disabling it or using anti-theft/anti-vandalism devices.
- Lock oil and gas tank caps where possible as a means of deterring vandalism.
- Park equipment centrally in a well-lighted, secure area.
- Provide a secure storage area for target building materials.
- Keep the on-site inventory of materials to a minimum.
- Store equipment, materials, and tools away from perimeter fencing.
- Remove equipment and materials from the site when no longer needed - do not use the site for storage.
- Carefully supervise all trash removal from the site.

The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to imply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.
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