



Business Watch

Preventing Crimes Against Business

Business Watch is a program of:

Spokane C.O.P.S.

901 North Monroe

Spokane, WA 99201

Introduction – Keeping You Informed and Your Business Safe



Crime Prevention ~ The anticipation, recognition and appraisal of crime risk and the initiation of an action to remove or reduce the risk.

Crime prevention is a pattern of attitudes and behaviors directed at both reducing crime and enhancing the sense of safety and security. Crime prevention positively influences the quality of life in our society and helps develop environments where crime cannot flourish.

Business Watch Goal?

Bring businesses and citizens to the point of assuming primary responsibility for the security of their neighborhood and to reduce the potential for crime in the neighborhood.

Community policing is based on a philosophy that recognizes the interdependence and shared responsibility of the police and community in making a more livable and safer city. Crime is not a problem that the police department can solve alone. The community has an extremely important role to play.

For this reason, we support the formation and ongoing activity of local chambers of commerce or merchant's associations, you together who are best able to solve problems common to your own areas and unique locales. These problems go far beyond crime related issues, like area promotions, traffic or zoning concerns, joint communities. Paying attention to your own business, and working with your neighboring businesses to solve common problems is the best way to insure a healthier and more prosperous future for everyone.

The crime prevention information in this booklet is for business owners, managers, and your neighboring businesses. Topics include preventive measures for:

- Burglary
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Security
- Robbery
- Shoplifting
- Internal Theft
- Trespassing
- Vandalism, Graffiti and Gang Activity
- Workplace Violence
- Terrorism

Treat this material as tips for self-help measures you can do yourself to reduce the likelihood of being a crime victim, working with your local association of neighbors and your police or sheriff's department.

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Burglaries

Businesses are four times as apt to be burglarized as homes, and small businesses are targets in over half of the commercial burglaries committed. Moreover, few burglars are caught. Almost 80% of all burglaries go unsolved.

These statistics emphasize the fact that your business must be made as burglar-resistant as possible. There are many measures you can take to make it clear to potential burglars that your business is no place to do their business! By incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices, you have a better chance in keeping your business from becoming a crime statistic.

Remember - law enforcement agencies would much rather work with you to prevent crimes than to spend time apprehending criminals. The following are suggested preventive measures you can put into place at your business.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts. You can take preventative measures to secure your business and surrounding property.

When you plan your store's safety, follow the four principles of CPTED.

CPTED Principle #1 – Natural Surveillance

"See and be seen" is the overall goal when it comes to CPTED and natural surveillance. A person is less likely to commit a crime if they think someone will see them do it. Lighting and landscape play an important role in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

CPTED Principle #2 – Natural Access Control

Natural Access Control is more than a high block wall topped with barbed wire. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED utilizes the use of walkways, fences, lighting, signage and landscape to clearly guide people and vehicles to and from the proper entrances. The goal with this CPTED principle is not necessarily to keep intruders out, but to direct the flow of people while decreasing the opportunity for crime.

CPTED Principle #3 – Territorial Reinforcement

Creating or extending a "sphere of influence" by utilizing physical designs such as pavement treatments, landscaping and signage that enable users of an area to develop a sense of proprietorship over it is the goal of this CPTED principle. Public areas are clearly distinguished from private ones. Potential trespassers perceive this control and are thereby discouraged.

CPTED Principle #4 – Maintenance

CPTED and the "Broken Window Theory" suggests that one "broken window" or nuisance, if allowed to exist, will lead to others and ultimately to the decline of an entire neighborhood. Neglected and poorly maintained properties are breeding grounds for criminal activity. We will work with you to develop a formal CPTED based maintenance plan to help you preserve your property value and make it a safer place.

Preventive Measures – Using CPTED Practices

Ensure your property exteriors are clean, neat and well-maintained.

- Curb appeal attracts customers to your business by providing an inviting, aesthetically-appealing atmosphere that makes customers and employees feel secure. A well-maintained facility communicates a feeling of care and reflects the level of service and value customers can expect to receive within your establishment. In addition to benefiting business growth and traffic, curb appeal also serves as a deterrent to vandals to prevent vandals from climbing them.

Restrict access.

- Incorporate shrubs, thorny plants and clinging vegetation like vines to restrict vandal access and protect walls and other large flat surfaces. Uneven surfaces will serve as deterrents because they make the graffiti less visible.
- Add or improve lighting, such as motion-activated lights and “spot lights,” around the building to illuminate obscured areas and promote natural surveillance.
- Use fences, controlled entrance and exits, rails and other barriers that deters through traffic.
- Control access to roofs by moving commercial trash bins away from walls and covering drainage systems.

Boost security.

Make sure your property has good security measures in place to protect all areas of your property and prevent access for graffiti vandals. See **Security Systems** section in this guide.

- Install security cameras.
- Organize a “Business Watch” surveillance program with nearby merchants.
- Consider employing security personnel to monitor property.
- Employ graffiti resistant materials or coatings on chronically hit areas.

Preventive Measures – Business Owner and Employees

- Keep a minimum of cash on the premises. Leave cash registers empty and open after hours.
- Move valuable merchandise and business equipment such as computers away from the windows or doors to prevent smash-and -grab thefts.
- Make it difficult to steal merchandise. i.e. alternate the dire direction of hangers on the rack, tie appliance cords together, chain bicycles, lock small valuables in cabinets and showcases.
- Arrange window displays so that passersby and police can see into the store.
- Anchor your safe to the floor in a well-lit, highly visible location. Keep all valuable documents and items, including company vehicle keys, in safe.
- Always leave an interior light that is visible from the street. IF for any reason it is off, the darkened store will arouse suspicion.
- Finally, don't lock a burglar inside when you leave. Inspect all closets, bathrooms and other hiding places before closing. For personal safety, try to have two people present at both opening and closing.
- If you suspect that your business has been burglarized, call 911 immediately. Do not try to enter the premises - the burglar may still be inside. Don't disturb any evidence. Consult with your local C.O.P.S. Substation to discuss how to best protect your business from another burglary.

Security Systems

Having a security alarm system may decrease the chances of a burglary. Even if the alarm system does not keep a burglar from breaking in, it may cause the burglar to stay a shorter amount of time. Security systems are designed to:

- Detect an intrusion
- Activate a warning
- Deter crime
- Protect life and property
- Summon emergency response
- Aid in criminal apprehension

Preventive Measures – Business Owner and Employees

In choosing a security system, you must consider what's inside your business and think about the records, legal documents, marketing data, cash, and people in your establishment. There are basically 7 steps that you can take to make your business more secure physically. These items are arranged from simple to complex. While all of these suggestions won't apply to every building, if you start at the top of the list and work your way down, you will find practical steps that you can take to protect your people and assets.

- Install deadbolt locks – the deadbolt lock is a foundation block of physical security.
- Establish a control policy for keys to locks – know who is the keeper of the businesses keys.
- Install an alarm system – Physical security measures such as deadbolt locks are designed to keep intruders out. If they get in, however, you need to know about it.
- Assign a Floor Marshall – this person gives other employees a go-to person for reporting suspicious individuals or activity.
- Install video surveillance – not only does a camera system improve your ability to monitor your premises, it can also provide useful evidence and information if you need to investigate an accident, attack, or theft.
- Learn about CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. This is a simple concept to help update the building and property to discourage crime.

There are always pros and cons to installing an alarm system. False alarms are a typical problem. Some causes for false alarms are:

- Untrained people using the system
- Weak system batteries
- Open, unlocked or loose fitting doors and windows
- Drafts from heaters or AC units that move products, signs, balloons, etc.

Having some type of security systems is so important for any business. Training your employees on the proper operation of the system and retrofitting the building to accommodate the system will help to eliminate what could become costly false alarms.

Robberies

The majority of robberies involve either the threat or the use of a weapon, making this crime against business the most dangerous to employees and customers. Furthermore, according to the Small Business Administration, two-thirds of all money obtained by robbery goes from small businesses.

It is therefore imperative that businesses take as many measures as possible to prevent robbery. Some of the following recommendations may not be feasible in certain businesses. But the more of them you are able to follow, the greater security image you will present, and the less chance that your business will become a target for robbery.

Preventive Measures - The Premises

- Install sufficient lighting to provide good visibility for the interior and exterior of your business and the parking lot. Well-lighted areas enable employees to keep an eye out for suspicious-looking persons, and it also increases the possibility - in the event of a holdup - that someone outside will be able to see the robbery occurring.
- To further enhance two-way visibility at your cash register area, avoid hanging large signs or posters on the front doors and windows. If you do place signs on the windows or doors, placement should be minimal.
- Practice and advertise a cash control policy. Law enforcement experts consider this measure to be one of the strongest deterrents for robberies. Keep the lowest possible amount of cash on the premises and adopt a policy to limit the amount of currency for small purchases. Let everyone know that you practice these cash - control measures. Post a sign, such as \$50.00 "Maximum Cash in Register" near your checkout stand and/or on the entrance door.
- Keep "bait money" in your till. Record the dates and serial numbers of a few bills and keep them separate, such as at the bottom of a till section, as "bait money" that can be traced by the police.
- Place colored tape markers at the main entrance to help employees gauge the height of a robber as he leaves your business. Using different colors, place the strips of tape at the 5', 5'6", and 6" heights.
- Install an alarm system. The most important factor in alarm selection is the safety with which it can be activated without arousing the robber's suspicions. A "bill trap" or "money clip" alarm is silently activated and considered to be one of the safest types of alarms during robberies.
- Make sure that side or back doors are kept locked at all times to prevent a potential robber from entering undetected.
- Vary your banking routine. Deposit money as often as practical, but never less than daily. Carry the cash in different containers and avoid using a money bag. Bank at various times of the day, so a routine cannot be determined by anyone casing your business.

Preventive Measures - Employees

- If possible have two persons on hand at both opening and closing, the times that are most vulnerable to robberies. Before opening, have one employee check the business before others enter. At closing, check all rooms for persons before locking up.
- Have employees use the main entrance to avoid the chance that a back door will be left unlocked accidentally.

- Post the 911 and Crime Reporting Center emergency telephone numbers on or near all of the phones in your business. Keep suspect identification forms obtained from your law enforcement agency on hand for all employees.
- Train employees to be aware of unusual behavior. Inside the business, this may include "customers" who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store while appearing to shop or browse through a magazine. Employees should also be concerned with customers wearing inappropriate clothing, such as someone wearing an overcoat in hot weather. Outside, be aware of individuals in parked cars and telephone booths, two favorite observation post for casing a business. Call 911 and ask for a patrol check.
- Have employees greet customers as they enter the store and ask if they need help. Robbers don't like to be noticed or to have personal interaction.
- Finally, after these preventive measures have been taken, walk and talk through the steps of a robbery and the follow-up with your employees. Review these steps periodically.
- Paint over or remove graffiti immediately. The more typical graffiti becomes in an area, the more will be written there.
- Repair vandalism damage immediately.
- Make sure that property owners of vacant buildings keep them in good repair and properly secured.
- Keep the neighborhood clean.
- Discourage loitering in service areas, on streets and alleys.
- Make sure every business has a visible sign on or in its location.
- Develop a Business Watch Program by contacting Spokane C.O.P.S. at 835-4572.
- Report vandalism activity to 911.
- Do not ignore it when your business is not directly involved. Sooner or later it will be.
- Know your neighboring businesses!

In the Event of a Robbery

- **REMAIN CALM! OBEY INSTRUCTIONS! PICTURE THE SUSPECT! SAFEGUARD LIFE AND EVIDENCE!**
- Despite taking preventive measures, there is still always a chance that a robbery may occur. In that event, it is crucial to know how to handle the situation to protect the safety of employees and customers. The average robbery takes less than two minutes. Once a robbery begins, your main objective is to end it as quickly and safely as possible.
- **NEVER RESIST A ROBBER!** You are dealing with a highly-volatile individual and the stakes are not worth serious injury or death.
- Be as cooperative and efficient as possible. Remember, the longer the robbery takes, the more nervous the robber becomes. Follow his/her instructions exactly. If he/she asks for tens and twenties, for example, give him/her those only.
- Inform the robber of any unexpected moves or possible surprises. If he/she wants the money in a bag and you have to reach below to get one, tell him/her what you are going to do. If someone is in the back room or is expected in the store, let him/her know.

- Do not try to use an alarm, especially of the hand- or foot-activated type, unless you can do so without any obvious movement which might cause the robber to react in panic. A silent "bill trip "alarm can be used. (Please see under Preventive Measures.)
- If possible, try to take note of the robber's appearance and his/her height from the height marker gauge as he/she exits the store.
- Don't chase or follow the robber. To chase a robber is to invite violence and the police could also mistake you for one of the criminals.

Following the Robbery

- Once the robber has left the business, try to observe through the window:
 - type of getaway vehicle
 - license plate number
 - any accomplice
 - direction of escape
- Call 911 immediately. Do this even if you already have activated an alarm. State your name, address, telephone number and what happened. Stay on the line until they tell you to hang up.
- Discontinue business and close the store if at all possible.
- Ask any witnesses to stay until police arrive. While they wait, encourage them to write down what they remember. IF they can't stay, get their names and addresses so police can reach them later.
- Fill in your suspect identification form while you are waiting for the police. Write down exactly what the robber said and any details you can call about the robber's appearance, speech and mannerisms.
- Do not discuss details of the robbery or compare notes with anyone else, including fellow employees or witnesses. It's easy to become confused.
- Protect the crime scene, including fingerprints or any evidence such as a demand note. Use a box, bag or anything else handy to cover or block off any merchandise, counter area or door handle which the robber may have touched. Avoid handling these items yourself.
- Give the recorded serial numbers of your bait money to the police.
- Let the police answer any inquiries from the news media. Do not disclose the amount of money taken with anyone except law enforcement.

Shoplifting – Who Shoplifts?

There's no typical shoplifter — people who steal from stores can be any age, race, gender, and social and economic background. Shoplifters generally fall into two categories:

- Professional shoplifters. These people usually take expensive items, like clothing and jewelry that they can resell easily.
- Amateur or casual shoplifters. Most shoplifters are in this group. Casual shoplifters don't usually go into a store with the intention of stealing — they simply see the opportunity to take something and do.

Many people assume that shoplifters have a mental disorder or that they must really need the items they are stealing in order to survive. But the truth is that's not why most people steal. Very few people have kleptomania (a compulsive urge to steal), and many people who steal have enough money to pay for the items.

Someone might shoplift for many reasons. But there's no way around the fact that shoplifting is stealing — and in most places there are heavy penalties for it, including being arrested and possibly charged with a crime.

Some people may not realize how serious shoplifting can be — what might seem like an innocent prank can actually affect a person's future, including the chances of getting a job. Lots of teens find out the hard way that stores take shoplifting very seriously.

Preventive Measures - Employees

Have employees greet all customers as they enter the store and ask if they need help. One phrase every shoplifter hates to hear is "can I help you?" Acknowledge waiting customers with a polite remark, such as "I'll be with you in a minute." Your customers will appreciate the attention and any shoplifters won't.

- Train employees to spot potential shoplifters.
- Be aware of customers who:
- Enter the store in a group (particularly youths), then break up and go in different directions.
- Attempt to monopolize a salesperson's time or distract them. The shopper may be covering for an accomplice stealing elsewhere in the store.
- Linger in one area, loiter near stockrooms or other restricted areas or who wander aimlessly through the store.
- Handle a lot of merchandise, but take an unusually long time to make a decision.
- When ringing up merchandise at the cash register, have employees:
- Check the lower racks of shopping carts.
- Watch for switched price tags.
- Inspect containers which could conceal stolen items.
- Tape or staple the sales receipt to the bag.
- Show a customer only one valuable item at a time.
- Ensure there are an adequate number of employees working during peak business hours.

Apprehending a Shoplifter

As a business owner, it is important to be knowledgeable of the shoplifting laws in Washington State. They can be obtained by contacting your local law enforcement agency or the Washington State Crime Prevention Association.

Washington State law allows you to detain a suspect at any time after you have witnessed concealment of your merchandise. However, customers may not be "frisked," have their packages randomly inspected or be searched unless the suspect has been placed under arrest.

If you suspect a shoplifter, it is generally advisable to let him/her pass the last possible point of payment before apprehending. The suspect does not have to leave the store before you detain him/her.

Initial contact with the suspect should be verbal, not physical, and a non-accusatory approach is preferable. Identify yourself and inquire about the merchandise "Excuse me. I'm the manager of the store. I believe you have some merchandise which you have forgotten to pay for. Would you please come to my office so that we can straighten out this matter?"

Call 911 immediately.

While detaining the suspect, make sure there is an employee present who is the same gender as the suspect. Female suspects should never be detained in private solely by a male.

Internal Theft

Internal theft costs businesses an estimate \$27.2 billion in 1991. Thirty percent of all small business failures are due to internal theft.

The variety of ways in which an employee can steal from a company is limited only by the imagination. Some of the more common methods include pilferage of merchandise, supplies or cash, non-registered sales, employee fraud, check-kiting, payroll fraud, expense account fraud, creation of phony suppliers and various forms of business sabotage.

There are some very effective measures you can take to prevent internal theft, but the most important step is for you - the employer - to set a good example. Don't go out to lunch, taking twenty dollars from the till on the way. Don't borrow tools from work to use at home. Inspire honesty with your employees by following your own company's policy.

Preventive Measures - Employee Hiring

- Thoroughly investigate the background of prospective employees.
- Check personal and credit references.
- Diplomatically inform new employees of your company's internal theft policy, what constitutes "internal theft" and provide this information to each new employee in writing.
- Number and log all keys before issuing them to new employees.
- Ensure that employees who are hired to handle accounting and funds are adequately bonded.
- If possible, never allow only one employee sole responsibility for the company's accounting.

Preventive Measures - Employee Relations

- Encourage a spirit of teamwork. Provide a consistent example of honesty, fairness, and accountability. Promptly address any employee concerns or problems.
- If an employee seems upset, take the time to ask why.
- Remove temptation and opportunity.
- Don't leave the keys in company vehicles.
- Organize merchandise in a neat and orderly fashion so it will be easy to identify if an item is missing.
- Don't leave cash or company checks laying around.
- Clearly label equipment, tools and supplies with the company's name.
- Don't leave a supply of signed blank checks when you go on vacation.
- Spot-check accounting records. Personally approve credit memos, bad-debt write-off, unusual discounts, and other documentation for sales returns and allowances.
- Conduct "exit interviews" with employees who are leaving. Significant information may be revealed regarding various kinds of internal theft at the point when an employee is leaving the company.

Trespassing – Understanding the Law

The definition of trespass is "Unlawful interference with another's person, property or rights." A person is guilty of criminal trespass if he knowingly enters or remains unlawfully in a dwelling or premises, or if he knowingly enters or remains unlawfully in a building or upon real property which is fenced or enclosed in a manner designed to exclude intruders. A person commits criminal trespass that, knowing he does not have the owner's effective consent to do so, enters or remains on property, or a portion thereof. Laws vary by state, so local laws must be consulted to determine applicable requirements. It is a defense to the crime to show that an element of the crime, such as knowingly entering or remaining without authorization, is lacking. An attempted criminal trespass requires that a person act with the intent to commit criminal trespass, and his conduct must constitute a substantial step toward committing the aggravated criminal trespass.

How is trespassing related to crime prevention? Trespassing comes up many times in a business setting. Consider the customer who is disruptive or the one you suspect stole from you last time. Don't forget the visitor in your office that is starting to get angry. Dealing with all of these people can be unnerving if you don't know where you stand. Understanding the rules can allow you to determine the outcome of these situations and possibly avoid a violent confrontation.

To understand the issue of trespassing, you need to divide this into two parts, inside your business and outside your business.

Inside Your Business

Whether you own a retail store or a factory, at some point someone is going to be there, long after you think they should go.

How do you make them leave? The answer is you don't. While certain legally defined circumstances allow for the use of physical force to be used to remove someone from the property, it is best to avoid this if possible. Instead, the law requires that a reasonable request to leave be made. What does this mean? It means you or your employee can tell him to leave. If the suspect remains, then he is trespassing.

When should you call the police? Before there is a problem! So when you decide to ask the subject to leave, you should have someone else calling the 911. If he leaves while you are doing this, then you can cancel the 911. It is best to get the police responding until you see if the suspect is going to comply. Please remember to cancel the police if the problem leaves.

It is important to designate specific areas just for employees. Visitors to your business need to know what areas are off limits to them. If there are store room doors in your business place a sign on the door/s stating "authorized personnel only" or "employees only". This allows for persons to be trespassed from your business if they enter the off limit area. The sign should be placed at average eye level and clearly stated. If the business has a counter area for employees only to go behind, place a sign on the counter stating "authorized personnel behind counter only".

Outside of Your Business

Before trespassing becomes an issue for your business, it can be valuable to have an "authority to arrest" form on file with your local police precinct.

An "authority to arrest form" gives the police department permission to arrest people trespassing on your property when the business is closed (no trespassing signs must be posted). If the business is open for business, an officer will have to make contact with someone to verify that the person is not a customer or otherwise allowed to be on the property (due to recent court ruling). An authority arrest form is completed by the property owner/agent and then returned to the police department. The local police precinct manages the authority to arrests on file for their precinct. The files are then available for officers to utilize at their discretion.

- The form must contain the original signature of the owner/agent.
- This form needs to be updated every two years or when the information it contains has changed.
- This is a very valuable tool for crime prevention because it shows that trespassers are not welcome in or around your business.

"No trespassing" signs are also recommended to be placed around your business. The signs need to be

- placed at all reasonable entrances as well as sporadically throughout the property.
- mounted on fences or on the buildings.
- mounted at a height where they are visible, but not so low that they can be easily removed or damaged or tampered with average eye level.

Notice of Trespass Form

Businesses can issue a Notice of Trespass form to anyone disturbing the flow of business on their property. People who are soliciting, panhandling, skateboarding or loitering in any other way near the business can be served the form.

Any agent of the business can serve the form, meaning a security guard or an authorized employee is allowed to fill out and serve the form to solicitors or loiterers.

The form is simple (see sample in your packet):

- The person filling it out can expect to put their name, signature and the business address on the form, view the subjects I.D., and have a witness.
- The person being served will need to provide their name, birthdate, address and signature, if possible.
- Once a person is served the Notice of Trespass form, they are not allowed on that property again. If they are caught loitering after being served they will be arrested for a misdemeanor.
- While a police officer does not need to be present for the service, in situations where people are uncomfortable with the service and they're having difficulty identifying somebody or they're meeting some sort of resistance from the person, they can call the police department and they will come out and identify the person and assist with the service.

Vandalism

Vandalism, including arson, graffiti, and other forms of property damage and defacement, are not only crimes against individual merchants, but also crimes against the neighborhood.

Vandalism that goes unrepaired detracts from the appearance of the neighborhood, not just the building vandalized. It also sends a message that this kind of behavior, and perhaps other criminal behavior, is tolerated.

Community efforts are often an effective way to deal with vandalism. Greater Spokane Inc. at 801 West Riverside, (509) 624-1393, is an excellent focal point for developing an anti-vandalism strategy for the community. Send the message that vandalism and graffiti are not normal in your community and will not be tolerated.

Together we do make a difference!

Graffiti and Gang Activity

Graffiti is a constant battle for police, parks department, and our citizens. There is a direct relationship between the decrease in damage to property and the efficiency of graffiti removal from public areas. Research and experience show that rapid removal with 24 hours is the most effective way to reduce repeat attacks of graffiti. The City of Spokane needs its citizens to help stop graffiti vandalism.

Graffiti does not mean that gangs are in your neighborhood! The vast majority of graffiti in Spokane is written by "taggers." A tagger writes his or her nickname ("tag") so that it will be seen by his or her peers. Taggers vandalize all parts of the city, and are not necessarily tied to a specific neighborhood.

The City of Spokane's Graffiti Ordinance states that graffiti must be covered up or removed within 10 days. Property owners who ignore a city request to abate the graffiti within that 10 day period could have their properties declared a nuisance and incur a fine.

Report ALL instances of graffiti to the Crime Reporting Center at 456-2233.

Preventive Measures – Business Owner and Employees

You can take preventative measures to make it more difficult for vandals to deface your property exterior assets. Incorporate the CPTED practices (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) to you help keep your business free of vandalism. See **CPTED** section in this guide.

If your facility has been defaced by graffiti, you should:

- Report graffiti vandalism to CRIME CHECK at 456-2233. Make sure you get an incident report number, a common requirement of insurance companies.
- Work with local authorities to determine if the graffiti is being done by taggers or gangs.
- Photograph the graffiti before it's removed to assist law enforcement in their investigation and support your insurance claims.
- Be aware of Spokane's "graffiti ordinance," which dictates how quickly graffiti must be removed and who is responsible for removal. Most often, private businesses are responsible for removal

Proper paint selection and application.

Keep in mind, darker, muted colors such as grays, browns and brick-red are less attractive to graffiti vandals because graffiti will not stand out on these hues. If possible, it's best to avoid painting surfaces black or white. A clear-coat finish will protect both painted and unpainted surfaces, providing a barrier between your business exterior surfaces and graffiti. Protective film can be used on windows.

Perform rapid and continuous removal of graffiti.

This is the best way for businesses to protect the image of their establishment and neighborhood, preserve customers' sense of security and discourage graffiti vandals. Various studies have shown that removal of graffiti within one to two days results in a nearly zero rate of reoccurrence. Quick removal not only reduces the likelihood of reoccurrence, but also eliminates the gratification vandals receive and makes it easier to remove. The longer the surface material is affected, the more difficult it is to remove. Additionally, if graffiti is not removed within a reasonable amount of time, businesses may be subject to fines in accord with the city of Spokane's graffiti ordinance.

Support your community.

Support your community's efforts to reduce vandalism because the neighborhood's atmosphere can impact your business, even if your facility hasn't been vandalized.

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can happen in any working environment and can range from threats and verbal abuse to actual physical assaults including homicide.

Workplace violence has emerged as an important safety and health issue in today's workplace. This violence can have devastating effects on the productivity of organizations and on the quality of life of the employees. However, relatively few employers have established effective programs to combat this problem.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, each year almost 1 million individuals become victims of violent crime while working, 21% of all violent crimes. The report states that approximately 500,000 victims of violent crime in the workplace lose an estimated 1.8 million workdays each year and over \$55 million in lost wages, not to including days covered by sick and annual leave.

Employers and law enforcement share a leadership responsibility in combating workplace violence. By working together, police and business owners can be far more effective in this effort. In addition, this partnership may serve other common interest, such as

- Improving the level of cooperation on community policing and business crime prevention efforts, and
- Increasing the extent to which employers and law enforcement share resources.

Preventive Measures - The Exterior

- Adequately light all exterior sides of your business (including alleyways) and the employee parking lot, using vandal-resistant fixtures.
- As most store burglaries occur at night when it's dark, lighting serves as one of the most important deterrents.

Preventive Measures - Employees

- Employees know proper procedures for reporting any threats made towards them or the business
- Employees have access to "safe rooms"
- After hours the business is locked down with only one access point
- Employees know to use security escort services after hours
- Employees use the "buddy system: to work together if problems arise

Terrorism

The FBI definition of terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

There are different levels of terrorism that affect businesses, from bombings and the threat of chemical and biological attacks to armed robberies, threats, and harassment to more low level indicators like graffiti and vandalism.

So, what role do you play? Business owners and their employees must prepare and train to respond to a terrorist attack, no matter the level. Prevention is the key! The most effective use of anti-terrorism efforts is prevention of an incident either before or when the terrorist is the planning stage.

Community policing principles stress that information and intelligence are key factors in addressing the response to community concerns. Nowhere is this more critical than in identifying and preventing terrorist attacks.

Disasters can happen anywhere, often with little or no warning. Is your business prepared? What can you do to protect your business, employees and customers? Where should you begin?

Disaster Recovery Begins Before a Disaster

Even if you think you are not in a disaster-prone area, something like a chemical tanker truck overturning can prevent you and your employees from getting to your facility. Even if a flood doesn't put your business under water, customers and supplies may not be able to get to you. Power outages, brown-outs or surges can affect your daily business operations. Many disasters, like wind storms, tornadoes and earthquakes, can strike quickly and with little or no warning.

What can you do?

- Find out which natural and technological hazards can happen in your area.
- Get information about how to prepare your employees and clients to respond to possible hazards and provide help. Disaster safety information and CPR/first aid training are available from your local Red Cross chapter. Get more information at www.redcross.org or Chris Barnes at cbarnes@spokanecounty.org
- Network with others who have or need to develop risk or contingency management plans.
- Attend seminars and get information from local risk management associations or chapters.
- No business should risk operating without a disaster plan. While reports vary, as many as 40 percent of small businesses do not reopen after a major disaster like a flood, tornado or earthquake. These shuttered businesses were unprepared for a disaster; they had no plan or backup systems.

When you start to develop your disaster plan, consider three subjects:

- Human resources, physical resources and business continuity.
- Think about how a disaster could affect your employees, customers and workplace.
- Think about how you could continue doing business if the area around your facility is closed or streets are impassable.
- Think about what you would need to serve your customers even if your facility is closed.

Develop a Plan

Start building your plan now. Here are some suggestions you may want to consider:

- Keep phone lists of your key employees and customers with you, and provide copies to key staff members.
- If you have a voice mail system at your office, designate one remote number on which you can record messages for employees. Provide the number to all employees.
- Arrange for programmable call forwarding for your main business line(s). Then, if you can't get to the office, you can call in and reprogram the phones to ring elsewhere.
- If you may not be able to get to your business quickly after an emergency, leave keys and alarm code(s) with a trusted employee or friend who is closer.
- Install emergency lights that turn on when the power goes out. They are inexpensive and widely available at building supply retailers.
- Back up computer data frequently throughout the business day. Keep a backup tape off site.
- Use UL-listed surge protectors and battery backup systems. They will add protection for sensitive equipment and help prevent a computer crash if the power goes out.
- Purchase an NOAA Weather Radio with a tone alert feature. Keep it on and when the warning signal sounds, listen for information about possible severe weather and protective actions to take.
- Stock a minimum supply of the goods, materials and equipment you would need for business continuity.
- Consult with your insurance agent about special precautions to take for disasters that may directly impact your business. Remember, most policies do not cover earthquake and flood damage. Protect valuable property and equipment with special riders. Discuss business continuity insurance with your agent.
- Keep emergency supplies handy, including:
 - Flashlights with extra batteries
 - First aid kit
 - Tools
 - Food and water for employees and customers to use during a period of unexpected confinement at your business, such as if a tanker truck over-turned nearby and authorities told everyone in the area to stay put for an extended period.

Reduce Potential Damage

- Prevent or reduce disaster damage in your facility by taking precautions, such as:
- Bolting tall bookcases or display cases to wall studs.
- Protecting breakable objects by securing them to a stand or shelf using hook-and-loop fasteners.
- Moving to lower shelves large objects that could fall and break or injure someone.

- Installing latches to keep drawers and cabinets from flying open and dumping their contents.
- Using closed screw eyes and wire to securely attach framed pictures and mirrors to walls.
- Using plumber's tape or strap iron to wrap around a hot water heater to secure it to wall studs.
- You should also consider having a professional install:
 - Flexible connectors to appliances and equipment fueled by natural gas
 - Shutters that you can close to protect windows from damage caused by debris blown by a hurricane, tornado or severe storm
 - Automatic fire sprinklers

Protect Your Employees, Customers and Business

Protect Your Employees, Customers and Business

- Designate one employee from each work shift to be the safety coordinator.
- This person will make all decisions relating to employee and customer safety and to the safety of the business itself.
- Safety coordinators should know how to contact the owner or operator at all times.

Everyone in your facility should know how to prepare for a disaster and what to do if a disaster occurs. Contact your local Red Cross chapter for specific information about how to stay safe in a tornado, earthquake, fire, flood, hurricane or other hazard.