

## **B.O.L.O. BE ON THE LOOKOUT!**

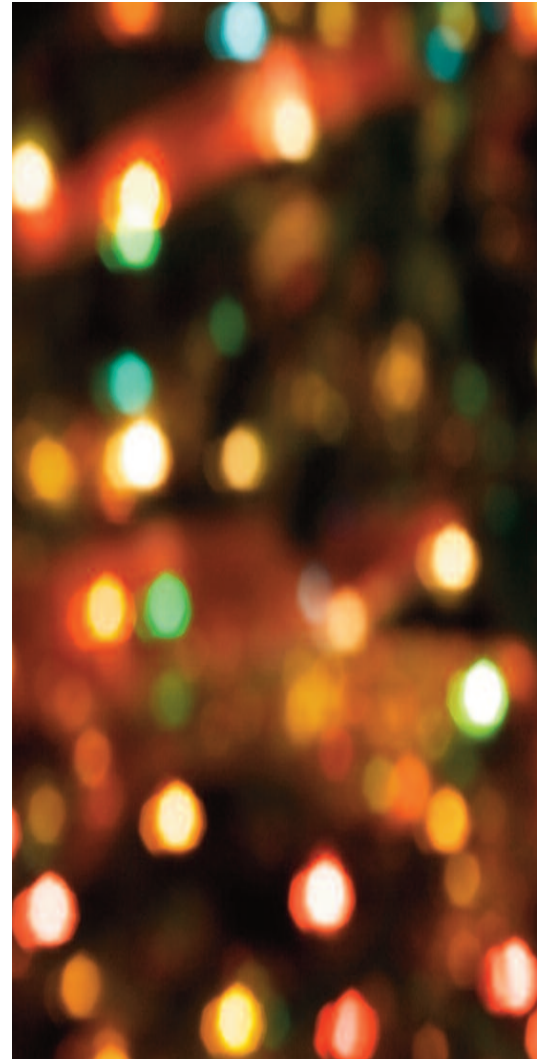
Holidays are a time for relaxing with family and friends. Unfortunately, criminals use this time to shift into high gear. Copper and equipment thefts as well as general business/home burglaries typically spike over these long weekends while occupants and property owners are away. Crime statistics for November 2011 indicate that this year will be no exception to the historical trend. Here are a few things to be aware of during this holiday season.

### **BURGLARY**

Burglary is by far the most common risk to our homes and businesses. According to the FBI, a burglary occurs somewhere in the U.S. every 15.4 seconds. A successful burglary can cause varying degrees of disruption: theft of materials, goods or equipment; lost productivity and business interruption. The financial loss can also increase due to clean-up and repair costs and gaps in insurance coverage.

Burglaries may seem random; however, they are the result of a selection process. The following suggestions can minimize your risk by making your business appear less attractive to criminals.


- Ensure that all locks for doors, windows and gates are employed and functioning properly. This is often the first line of defense in protecting your business from unwanted break-ins. Secure all keys, access codes and don't forget about skylights and other points of rooftop access.
- If applicable, test and ensure that all CCTV cameras are operating properly in both day and nighttime conditions.
- Ensure alarms and lighting are all operating properly.
- Maintain adequate levels of illumination for all points of property access, exterior storage areas and fence lines. The lighting design should address glare that may reduce visibility to security personnel and/or a CCTV system. A proper lighting system should also create a psychological deterrent to intrusion as well as make detection virtually certain in the event an entry is made into an unauthorized area of a business – this is the #1 deterrent to criminals.



- Post security signage: No Trespassing, Authorized Personnel Only, Violators Will Be Prosecuted, etc.
- Random security checks: designate someone to perform property checks at various times over the holiday periods.

### **THEFT**

Unattended property is attractive to criminals during this time of year. Whether for only a few minutes or a few days, your exposure to theft is very real. Merchandise, inventory, business equipment, holiday gifts, delivery packages, copper, cash, credit cards



and vehicles are all items of choice by criminals during the holiday season.

**Be alert!** Be aware of unusual or strange behavior. If someone seems to be acting suspiciously, or at the first sign of criminal activity, immediately inform local law enforcement. **Trust your instincts!**

## PARKING SAFETY

Whether they are adjacent to or remote from a building, stand-alone or interior, parking facilities pose security risks. In fact, no other place draws security concerns more than parking lots and garages. Studies have shown that approximately 40% of rapes and assaults take place in these areas.

Some recommendations, such as placing valuables or deliveries out of sight and being aware of your surroundings, are common sense, but they are often forgotten and therefore bear repeating. Park as close to an entrance as possible. When returning to your vehicle, always have keys in hand and walk with a purpose. Upon arriving at your vehicle, quickly inspect the vehicle interior, including the back seat and/or rear cargo area, if possible, before entering.

Lastly, always, always lock your vehicle and never leave the keys in the ignition, not even for a few minutes. It only takes a few seconds for someone to enter your vehicle and quickly leave the area.

## PERSONAL SAFETY

At all times, but especially during the holiday season, be **S.A.F.E**

- S** - Secure
- A** - Aware
- F** - Familiarize yourself with your surroundings
- E** - Every day

Know where you're going, how to get there and be aware of your surroundings.

Traveling in a group can provide additional security, though of course that's not always possible or practical. Anyone who is

traveling alone should feel free to ask to be escorted to their vehicle by a garage attendant or security officer. No one should feel ashamed or reluctant to seek help if they sense danger. Remember it is a facility's duty to provide an adequate level of protection against any known or reasonably foreseeable risks.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing ongoing partnerships with local law enforcement and other area businesses can significantly reduce the number of crime incidents that may impact your business, not only over the holidays but for the entire year.

Communicate with local law enforcement. Make sure they are aware of any closures, extended hours of operation or increased risks that may impact your business over the holidays and request their assistance if possible to better address these concerns.

Be a good neighbor. Open an ongoing dialogue with neighboring businesses, especially those that will be open during the holidays; raise their awareness to holiday crime risks so that suspicious activity is recognized and reported. Ensure that they also have your emergency contact information. Remember: **Be on the lookout!**

## CONTACT

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