

# BUSINESS CRIME PREVENTION KIT



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**

Wood Buffalo RCMP  
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## **What is Business Crime Prevention?**

Steps you can take to minimize the risk that your business may be the victim of either an internal or external crime.

Crime. It can happen to your business or your staff. Businesses need to be prepared for such a situation and should have protective measures and a plan in place. Criminals come in all forms – different shapes, sizes, colours and gender. Don't stereotype individuals you think may “look” like a criminal. All people should be treated with dignity and respect, but keep in mind that anyone may have a criminal intent.

This Business Crime Prevention Kit has been created to help Wood Buffalo businesses reduce the risk and impact of crime. While freedom from crime can never be guaranteed, the information and resources included within this Kit are provided as a proactive crime prevention initiative for you – so your business and your staff will be less likely to become victimized.

Crime costs Canadian businesses millions of dollars each year. Crime can be especially devastating for small businesses who can lose both customers and employees as a result of fear of crime. When businesses are victims of crime, they often react by changing their hours of operation, raising their prices to help cover their losses or relocating their place of business. Fear of crime isolates businesses and such isolation can actually increase vulnerability to crime.

Helping businesses reduce crime requires collaboration and community effort. Businesses can join together in efforts to alert each other to crime patterns and suspicious activities. No one knows your business better than you do. We encourage you to review the enclosed resources. If you are interested in a presentation for your staff on any of the topics included in this Kit, please contact Wood Buffalo RCMP at 780-788-4040.

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

This basic checklist utilizes the traditionally accepted Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles of Natural Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement, Access Control, and Maintenance. CPTED aims to reduce crime opportunities by modifying the physical environment. Being mindful of CPTED principles when designing, building, or maintaining spaces can help to control or eliminate criminal and nuisance behaviour.

## **Natural Surveillance:**

Plan well placed physical features like landscaping. Allow for clear sightlines that maximize visibility, including the use of effective lighting at night.

## **Territorial Reinforcement:**

Create both real and perceived barriers to your property. Define clear property lines that distinguish private spaces, semi-private spaces, and public spaces using landscaping, pavement, colour, signs and gates.

## **Access Control:**

Defining space creates a sense of ownership and provides cues about who belongs and how the space should be used. Mechanical Access Controls such as fences, sidewalks, and landscaping, can also be used to determine the flow of traffic and people.

## **Maintenance:**

Showing pride of ownership and good maintenance encourages people to use the space for its intended purpose. The Broken Windows Theory suggests that when property is taken care of, people will treat it with respect.

## ***Additional Strategies that support CPTED Principles:***

### **Target Hardening:**

Complements the 4 CPTED principles and includes features that can reduce the likelihood of being a desirable target, such as surveillance systems, door security, window locks, etc.

### **Community Activities/Programs:**

Businesses can encourage activities that bring more users to the space outside of regular business hours. Belonging to programs like Neighbourhood Watch and taking the time to get to know your neighbours deters crime and increases the reporting of suspicious and criminal activity.

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EMPLOYEE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Natural Surveillance

	<b>Well Placed Landscaping</b>	
	Trees trimmed up 6'	
	Bushes lower than 2'	
	<b>Sufficient Lighting (including parking lots)</b>	
	Vandal resistant fixtures	
	Placement of light fixtures (lit doorways)	
	Appropriate type of lighting for the area	
	<b>Sightlines are Unobstructed</b>	
	Clear sightlines from within (front, back, sides)	
	Clear windows on each exterior wall	
	Lack of blind spots, alcoves, blind corners	
	Sightlines to and from neighbors are clear	

## Territorial Reinforcement

	<b>Reinforced Ownership (i.e. private property)</b>	
	Security signage (i.e. 24 hour surveillance)	
	Building is clearly identified (i.e. name, address)	
	Clear distinction between private/public property	
	Celebrated entryway (welcoming & clearly defined)	
	Wayfinding (clear directional signs, etc)	

## Access Control

	<b>Access Controls Present &amp; Used Properly</b>	
	Fences/barriers/features limit unwanted access	
	All entrances are secure/have security	
	Feature placement - does not grant access (i.e. ladders, bins, etc.)	
	Sheds or other buildings are locked	

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

## Maintenance

	<b>General Maintenance - Appears in Good Repair</b>	
	Property clear of debris & garbage	
	No graffiti vandalism or property damage	

## Target Hardening

	<b>Security-Alarm or Security Services</b>	
	Visible staff at business entrances	
	Use of security cameras/surveillance systems	
	Locks and access codes are changed regularly	
	<b>Doors/Window Security-Appropriate Type</b>	
	Front (deadbolt, interior hinges, strike plates)	
	Back/other (deadbolt, interior hinges, strike plates)	
	Windows (bars/dowels/locks/screens/security film)	

## Community

	<b>Participate in Community Activities/Programs</b>	
	Know neighbors or neighboring businesses	
	Belong to neighborhood watch (residential)	

## Notes:

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

Proper security in your business can not only protect you from crime or vandalism, it also creates a safe, comfortable environment for your customers and staff.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts, in addition to traditional security measures such as locks, alarms and safes, can increase safety and security at your business.

## **Landscaping and architectural designs**

Use simple, inexpensive CPTED guidelines to improve security for your business:

- Ensure shrubs and trees don't create blind spots or hiding places.
- Trim bushes and hedges to a maximum height of three feet.
- Use walkways and landscaping to direct visitors to the proper entrance and away from private areas.
- Sidewalks, parking lots, doorways and all areas of the property should be well lit.
- Remove objects that may provide informal seating for loiterers.
- Recessed doorways can provide cover for criminal behavior or loitering. Change these to be flush with the walls, or install gates.
- Prevent easy access to the roof or fire escape from the ground.

## **Light up at night**

- Light up all entrances, including alleys, with vandal-proof fixtures.
- Leave some lights on inside your premises.

## **Natural Surveillance**

- Maintain clear visibility from the store to the street and sidewalk or parking areas.
- Window signs should cover no more than 15 percent of windows. Keep shelves and displays five feet high or less, especially in front of windows, for visibility.
- Keep weeds, shrubbery and debris away from your doors and windows. Don't provide thieves with places to hide, or climbing platforms.
- Monitor all entrances through visual or electronic surveillance.

## **Commercial Storefronts**

- Use cash drop safes during lower traffic hours.
- Avoid having a single employee make after-hours bank deposits.
- Install and monitor video cameras.
- Provide employees with safety training.
- Securely lock rear entrances.
- Use secure doors and frames.
- Put 180 degree door viewers in rear security doors.

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

## Management tips

- Your business hours should be the same as those of neighbouring businesses.
- Night time employees should have access to safe, visible parking located close to the entrance.
- Put a cash limit on hand, such as \$50, in place.
- Train employees to check regularly for cash over the limit and to place it in a drop safe that they can't open. Post a sign: "Maximum cash in register: \$50".
- Don't place large bills under the cash register – find a safe alternative hiding place.
- Try to have two staff on hand at opening and closing times as these are attractive times for robbers.
- Train employees to be alert for suspicious persons and call the RCMP or store security if they notice suspicious activity. Parked cars are common outdoor observation spots.
- Watch for customers who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store while shopping or browsing a magazine, or who seem nervous or rushed.
- Check all doors and windows at closing time.
- Keep side or back doors locked at all times and have employees use the main entrance.
- Work with other businesses in the area to promote shopper and business safety and address specific security issues.

## Controlling access to your business

- Locate your cash register at the front of the store, near the door, where it's visible from the outside.
- Ensure public paths are clearly marked.
- Use signs to direct customers to parking and business entrances.
- Only provide rear access to your business from rear parking lots.

## Other security options

- Install a monitored alarm system and post a conspicuous notice that you have one.
- Install video cameras and post signs advertising "Area Under Video Surveillance".
- Place height markers at the main entrance so employees can use them to gauge the height of a robber as he or she leaves your business. Place strips of differently colored tape at the 5', 5'6" and 6' heights.

# SECURITY OF BUSINESS PREMISES

Addressing security issues quickly and employing some basic risk management principles, can reduce the risk of crime for business, staff and customers. This section provides important security advice and information. However, it is not intended to replace privately contracted security advice.

## **The main aim of business security is to:**

- Prevent the business being targeted by offenders
- Reduce the impact that crime can have on a business
- Reduce the rewards for the offender
- Increase the effort required to access the premises and goods
- Increase the likelihood of an offender being identified and caught
- Assist police

## **Your level of security should depend on:**

- The type of business or trade
- The nature of the business or stock
- The period of time that the premises is not occupied
- The location of the premises
- The history of offences on the premises/business

## **PREVENTION**

### **Basic Security Tips**

- Make sure laneways and other external areas are well lit. Lighting should be in good working order and regularly inspected.
- Prune all trees and shrubs around your building to enable clear visibility. Ensure that this is maintained.
- Clear all building perimeters (including fences) of rubbish and potential climbing aids.
- Maintain well built and adequately secured boundary gates and fences.
- Fully secure all external doors and windows with good quality locking devices. Make sure they are regularly maintained. All doors should be of solid construction and well fitted.
- Fasten steel doorjamb strengtheners to doorframes.
- Consider installation of security bars, screens, or grills to vulnerable windows and/or skylights (subject to Fire Department approvals if necessary).
- Consider installation of heavy planters or large rocks to act as ram raid barriers.
- Consider installation of a monitored security alarm system.
- Prominently display any signs indicating the presence of a security system, the continual surveillance of the premises and any other security measures present.
- Consider installing electronic sensors to advise staff when customers are entering and leaving the business.
- Install a quality surveillance camera which will act not only as a deterrent but will assist police in identifying offenders.
- Minimize posters and curtains on shop windows (where possible) to ensure that visibility to and from the street is maintained.
- Ideally stand alone shelves within the store should be no more than 1.6 metres high thereby enabling clear visibility throughout the floor area by staff.
- Secure and register all property of value including details of make, model, serial number, description etc.
- Clearly and permanently mark all property with your store name or another identifier.
- Never leave large amounts of cash on premises overnight. Banking should be conducted during working hours.
- If a safe is present on site, ensure that it is located in a secure position and affixed to a solid object.
- Ensure all staff understand and obey lock-up procedures.
- Advise local police and any security provider of emergency after hours contacts for the business.



# SECURITY OF BUSINESS PREMISES

## **CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)**

### **Where to use**

- After hours surveillance of areas which have little or no natural surveillance such as passing motorists, pedestrians or employees
- Areas at risk to vandalism, graffiti or other criminal offences
- High-risk areas such as computer rooms or cash handling areas that are not adequately protected by staff surveillance
- Entrances, exits, front counter areas etc.

### **Equipment consideration**

- Cameras – quality digital lenses provide quality images
- Video recorders/computer hard drives – connected to camera/s, continually recording
- Signage – clearly displayed reminding customers that all activity is being recorded
- Monitors – placed in a prominent position easily observable by staff

It is important that staff know how to operate security equipment and that it is tested and checked regularly.

### **Positioning of cameras**

- At places where the offender/s is most likely to have to pass or want to access, such as building entry/exit points, cash registers, rear storerooms or areas where high value items are kept
- Clearly visible if seeking to deter potential offenders
- Placed at a height that captures a full view of the offenders face while not being obscured by other interferences
- In areas where image capture will not be compromised by insufficient lighting

For CCTV to be useful for police purposes, the largest possible facial image of an offender is required. The usefulness of facial images captured is largely dependent upon the quality of the camera used and placement of cameras. Do not position cameras at heights that only provide vision of the top of a persons head.

### **Key/Access Card Control**

- Must be maintained at all times to ensure internal security
- Utilize security keys/cards that cannot be copied without authorization
- Maintain a formal key/card register, ensuring that their issue and return is monitored
- Utilize a lockable key/card storage cabinet which provides controlled and restricted access
- When not in use, keys/cards should be kept in a lockable steel cabinet located in a secure area
- Maintain strict control of all keys/cards
- Keys/cards should be restricted to a minimum number of people and should be retrieved from ex-employees

### **Private Security**

When selecting a security firm, it is advisable to select a company that has an established reputation for quality service. To check whether a company is reputable, you can enquire with them about their professional accreditations and associations with regulatory agencies.

# PERSONAL SAFETY

Under Occupational Health and Safety legislation, all people have the right to work in a safe environment in which risk to their health and safety is minimized. Employers have an obligation to provide a safe working environment.

As the name suggests, 'Personal Safety' is a personal matter. An environment or circumstances that enable one person to feel safe may not assist another person's sense of safety. Using some or all of the tips below, they may assist staff members to satisfy their individual sense of personal safety. Additional factors may need to be considered depending upon individual circumstances.

## **WITHIN THE BUSINESS**

- Familiarize all staff with emergency procedures and policies on how to deal with aggressive people, armed robberies, shoplifters, cash handling etc. (Refer to Aggressive People information sheet).
- Restrict access to "employee only areas" and back rooms.
- Ensure valuables such as personal possessions belonging to staff remain locked away at all times. Items such as mobile phones, handbags and wallets should not be left unattended, even for a moment.
- Install audible door announcers to identify when customers enter the store.
- Keep doors and windows locked if staff are working late.
- When a staff member is temporarily leaving the premises, notify a second party and advise that person of the staff members' likely movements, expected time of return or arrival at next location.
- Encourage staff members to move their private vehicles closer to the business during daylight hours. After hours, arrange an escort to the car park or have someone watch their safe arrival into the car.
- Pre-program important numbers such as the RCMP Complaint Line 780-788-4040 into business telephones.

## **ON THE STREET**

- If a second person has been notified of a staff members' departure from the business, ensure that the same person is contacted and advised that the staff member has reached their intended destination safely.
- Avoid walking alone at night unless absolutely necessary, stay on lit paths and wear visible clothing.
- Wear comfortable clothes and footwear that allow for freedom of movement.
- Avoid shortcuts and dark, isolated areas.
- Walk purposefully and know where you are going.
- Walk on the footpath facing the oncoming traffic.
- If you feel threatened, cross the road, locate a telephone, or enter a store or place of business even if you have just left it.
- If using a public telephone, stand with your back to the phone after dialing – maintaining a view of the surrounding area and persons approaching.
- Carry purses and handbags close to body.
- Consider carrying a mobile telephone and a personal alarm for security.

## **IN YOUR CAR**

- Position vehicles as close to your work premises as allowed.
- Have car keys in hand ready for use. Do not search for them in a handbag along the way or when standing at the car door.
- Check inside the car by looking through the windows before getting in.
- Consider driving with all of the doors locked and the windows wound up.
- Do not leave valuable items visible inside the car.
- When leaving the car, always close the windows and any glass vents, remove the ignition key and lock the doors.

**NO AMOUNT OF PROPERTY IS WORTH RISKING YOUR SAFETY**

# AGGRESSIVE PEOPLE

Although the vast majority of customers are polite and friendly to deal with, violent outbursts that occur inside a store or small business can result in physical injury to staff, customers, the offender and/or damage to stock or fixtures.

It may be useful to keep photocopies of the Description Form (located in this Business Crime Prevention Kit) in a predetermined, convenient location within the business for quick and easy reference and use by staff. Make sure that staff members are familiar with its location and use.

## PREVENTION

Educating staff about conflict resolution can be a useful investment in avoiding customer complaints and potential risks such as those outlined above. Staff should be skilled to identify the difference between assertive, aggressive and potentially violent customers. In all instances of dealing with aggressive people, the main priority is to ensure the safety of yourself, your staff and your customers. Every situation is different and as such there is no one, absolute set of procedures in dealing with aggressive people. Following some basic steps however, may assist staff to respond to such situations.

### Basic Security Tips

- Assess the situation and remain calm at all times.
- If store security officers are employed, ensure staff are aware of when and how to contact them.
- If it appears that the safety of staff or customers is at risk, the police should be immediately telephoned at 911.
- Do not respond to the customers bad behaviour in the same manner.
- Remain respectful. Try to restore a sense of justice for the person. Explain what options are available and encourage them to try one of these.
- Patience is usually a good strategy and this can be achieved by not only listening to the person but by acknowledging their problem or situation:
- Staff members should not take insults personally – they are being delivered by a person who appears unreasonable and may relate to business policies and procedures as opposed to the employee personally
- Listening can be useful to allow the person to ‘let off steam’
- Remember that over a period of time anger can diminish
- Other staff not involved in the incident should not become an audience, however they should monitor the situation for any possible escalation.
- If the person is not able to be calmed and they continue to be offensive or obnoxious, politely request the person to leave the store.
- If having been politely requested to leave a store, a person refuses, contact the police and await their arrival. Do not engage in any further unnecessary dialogue.

### Violent Offenders

- Do not enter the persons physical space as this can escalate the situation.
- Discreetly remove any items that could potentially be used as weapons.
- Counter areas or display stands can be discreetly used to create natural barriers and distance between staff members and the other person.
- Employees are entitled to protect themselves from violence. The amount of force used however to repel the violence, must be reasonable and proportionate to the harm that is being sought to be avoided. Excessive force is not justified and can result in a counter claim of criminal assault or civil litigation.

# THEFT FROM STORE

Some people refer to stealing from a store as shoplifting but no matter what you call it, if somebody deliberately takes something from your store that they have not paid for, then it is THEFT.

## PREVENTION

### Store Layout & Design

- Open layout with good visibility to all areas.
- Shelves and stock neatly stacked and price tickets properly secured to goods.
- Where possible, expensive and easily portable goods locked in cabinets which are located close to staff working areas.
- Preferably well lit area, particularly around selling points.
- Warning signs regarding possible consequences of theft and the security measures in place at your store clearly displayed. These signs are obtainable from various government, police and private industry associations.
- Limited number of entry and exit points to store.
- Ideally cash registers located close to entry/exit points of the store and protected to prevent easy removal of money by offenders.
- Staff rooms and stock rooms kept locked at all times.
- Consider installation of surveillance devices such as surveillance mirrors and quality Closed Circuit Television (CCTV).

### Basic Security Tips

- Acknowledge all customers – customer service is one of the most effective crime prevention strategies.
- Pay attention to customers who are nervous or who appear distracted around merchandise.
- If store security or loss prevention officers are employed, familiarize staff with their identity, how and when they operate/when and how they are to be contacted.
- Approach people who stand around staff restricted areas, restrooms, stockrooms or stairways.
- Be aware of people wearing loose overcoats and bulky clothing, especially in hot weather.
- Approach and query persons claiming to be tradespersons, particularly in unauthorized areas. Consider requesting to inspect trade related identification.
- Be mindful that baby carriages, shopping trolleys, boxes and bags can be used by shoplifters to conceal the goods they are attempting to steal.
- Check the number of items taken in and out of changing rooms.
- Ensure empty hangars and excess stock are removed from racks and shelves.
- Ensure staff are familiar with the items/quantities of stock on display.
- Keep customers in view at all times and be conscious of having backs to customers.
- Never leave sales area or cash registers unattended.

### Watch for

- Hands – they do the stealing.
- Customers who do not appear to have a deliberate purpose to purchase items.
- Customers who remain in the store for lengthy periods of time.
- Customers who appear nervous, perspire or look agitated.
- Organized distractions which may result in one or more persons attempting to distract staff, while another person commits the theft.
- Unsupervised children who are in the store during school hours.

# ELECTRONIC CRIME (E-CRIME)

Increasingly small business retailers are opening their business and telephone lines to customers and suppliers through electronic trading. Coupled with the many benefits that electronic trading provides, it can however, expose a business to unique methods of crime involving the business, suppliers and customers.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MY BUSINESS?

It is important to put some measures in place to reduce risk and protect your business information.

### Basic Security Tips

- Install reputable anti-virus software and keep it up-to-date.
- Install reputable firewall software and keep it up-to-date.
- Keep software patches up-to-date.
- Passwords should be confidential, complex and regularly changed.
- Delete without opening any suspicious emails – curiosity is a tool often used to hack a computer system or send a virus.
- Only download software from reputable sources.
- Backup critical data and keep it separate from your Internet connected computers. Regularly copy the data to a CD or other backup device.
- Test that you can recover the information using that backup device.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY BUSINESS HAS BEEN HACKED?

The following is a useful list of potential indicators which may indicate the presence of hackers within the business.

- Your website has been changed.
- Your computer system performance is unusually and exceptionally slow.
- Secrets of your business have been exposed to the general public or to competitors.
- Transactions have been changed (i.e. a client or supplier account which had a balance of \$1000 now has \$950 without your authorization).
- There is odd activity in a computer log and the more it's investigated the more you suspect that something is wrong.
- Established business procedures do not appear to have been followed and transactions are unexplainable. This may indicate that someone is operating outside of your control and using your business.
- You are no longer receiving emails and no one receives emails you have sent.
- The entire system shuts down.
- There is a new program on your computer that you didn't install.

## ONLINE FRAUD

If you become the victim of online fraud, report the matter to your local police. You will need to ensure that you preserve any electronic evidence relating to the matter, including emails and any relevant computer logs. If you can, please copy this information to a CD or DVD and take it to the RCMP Detachment when you report the matter.

# ARMED ROBBERY

A small amount of planning may assist in reducing the risks of armed robbery to your business thereby maximizing the safety of your employees and customers.

It may be useful to keep photocopies of the Description Form (located in this Business Crime Prevention Kit) in a predetermined, convenient location within the business for quick and easy reference and use by staff. Ensure staff members are familiar with its location and use.

## **The aim of any planning around armed robberies should be to:**

- Prevent the business being targeted by offenders
- Maximize the safety of employees and customers
- Reduce the impact of the crime on the business
- Assist police in the apprehension process of any offender/s

## **PREVENTION**

- Be alert to strangers or individuals who may be observing the business or who are asking questions about how the business runs.
- Ensure all back and side doors and windows are kept secure.
- Do not discuss cash holdings or movements of cash in public.
- Consider installation of a safe in a secure area but within close proximity to the cash register. The safe should be secured to a sturdy fixture.
- Reduce cash held at counters to a workable minimum.
- Predetermine and designate escape routes and safe areas for employees to move to when required.
- Ensure that staff members are aware of security and armed robbery procedures and what to do in the case of such an event. This routine should be regularly practiced as with any other type of emergency drill.
- Make use of signage and stickers both inside and outside your business promoting security measures such as: time delay locks, video surveillance and minimum cash held on premises.
- Consider installation of electronic methods of payment to reduce the amount of cash kept on hand.
- Consider the installation of additional security devices such as duress / panic buttons and quality Closed Circuit Television (CCTV).

## **IN THE EVENT OF AN ARMED ROBBERY**

- Try to remain calm, assess the situation and do exactly as the offender says. Remember the number one priority is your safety, the safety of other staff and customers.
- Activate alarm devices as soon as possible but only if it is safe to do so.
- Avoid sudden actions and calmly explain any necessary movements to the offender. These could pose an unintended threat to the offender, who may already be anxious and tense.
- Speak only when spoken to as any conversation with the offender will prolong the incident.
- Unless otherwise ordered, discretely watch offender/s, making a mental note of their description especially scars, tattoos, prominent or other distinguishing features.
- Avoid direct eye contact with the offender.
- Note the offenders conversation including any indecent language, accent, nicknames or speech impediments.
- Observe and take note of any weapons that are being used.
- If safe to do so, observe the direction of travel taken by the offender/s when they leave the premises.
- If safe to do so, look to see if a vehicle has been used and if there are any other occupants, record the registration number, make, model and the color of the car.
- Never take drastic action during the robbery and do not chase the offender.

# ARMED ROBBERY

## AFTER THE ROBBERY

- Immediately telephone the Police on 911, even if you have activated a hold up or duress alarm. Provide the operator with:
  1. Exact location – business name/address of where the crime occurred including the closest intersecting street
  2. Your name
  3. Details of persons injured and whether medical assistance is required
  4. Date / Time / Nature of offence
  5. Number and description of offender/s including any vehicles used
  6. Direction of travel
- Only hang up the telephone when told to do so and stay off the phone until police arrive unless you remember additional information that may be important.
- Close the premises to the public and keep unauthorized persons out.
- Make sure that no person touches or moves any items where the offender/s was/were present.
- Consider arranging someone to meet police outside, particularly in large shopping areas to make the response time more efficient.
- Request that witnesses and customers remain until the police arrive – failing that, request their names, addresses and telephone numbers and pass them onto police when they arrive.
- Make sure witnesses are isolated from each other or are aware not to discuss descriptions or what happened with other witnesses
- Witnesses should independently try to write a full description of offender/s and what actually occurred in as much detail as possible. (Refer to ‘Description Form’ located in this Business Crime Prevention Kit)
- Do not make any statements to the media before discussing the matter with police.
- Supply to police all details no matter how insignificant they appear to you. This could include earlier suspicious customers, rude, drunk or drug affected customers or simply details of certain cars constantly driving past.
- Crime affects different people in different ways and the impact may not be felt immediately. Consideration should be given to organizing professional trauma counselling for employees affected.

# THEFT BY EMPLOYEES

An unfortunate aspect of managing and owning a retail outlet is the issue of theft by staff. Theft by staff can be committed in a number of ways; direct theft of revenue, stock, other employees' or clients' property or indirectly via the facilitation of these crimes by other people.

## PREVENTION

- Screen all applications for employment carefully. Check references provided and ensure any gaps in past employment are explained.
- Consider use of ongoing and regular criminal record checks.
- Develop policies that clearly identify system processes, acceptable/non-acceptable behaviour and consequences for policy breaches.
- Develop an induction program for new employees that provides a clear understanding of policies and procedures.
- Identify the preferred policy for dealing with the purchase of goods from the business by employees/friends/family and communicate this to all staff.
- Adopt a “prosecution policy” when dealing with staff. A successful prosecution in court which is widely publicized can act as an effective deterrent for others.
- Demonstrate and provide strong and consistent supervision of all staff.
- Immediately deal with issues of concern, such as short falls in daily takings.
- Provide ongoing retail security training programs to all staff.
- Encourage employee contribution to retail security initiatives.
- Have an effective asset inventory control system to identify losses as they occur.
- Provide a designated area where staff can safely lock away their personal belongings.
- Maintain strict key control at all times to ensure internal security.
- Regularly inspect delivery and garbage areas to guard against potential falsification of records or theft.
- Watch for customers recognized as continually returning to the same register or same staff member.
- Recognize and reward staff loyalty and honourable behaviour.

**Most staff members are loyal to their employers and will work very hard and diligently on their behalf, especially if appropriate reward and recognition processes exist within the business.**



# CASH HANDLING

The safe handling of cash within a business environment can assist in preventing crimes. Cash handling incorporates not only general cash security, but also the secure storage and transport of cash. It is important that all staff members having responsibilities involving cash are aware of cash handling procedures.

## **Some considerations relating to cash on premises**

- Advertise that only a minimum amount of cash is kept on the premises.
- Consider installing a safe that is securely fitted to a solid object.
- Ensure that before cash is counted, the staff member is in a safe and secure area of the business that is out of public view. This may include checking the premises.
- Make sure all exterior doors and windows are properly secured from the inside before counting money.
- If cash is being counted in a specific area, consider installation of a telephone or duress (panic button) alarm system at this site.
- Don't discuss cash amounts or handling procedures in public.
- It is not advisable to take cash home and be known to do so.
- To minimize damage to cash registers by thieves, consider leaving your tills empty and open overnight.

## **Cash register security is critical**

- Do not leave the register drawers open longer than necessary during business hours.
- Position the register to eliminate or restrict public view of its contents, which should not be within the reach of potential offenders.
- Keep as little cash in the register as possible, by regularly transferring it to a more secure place. Ensure this is done at random times.
- Encourage staff vigilance.

## **When transporting cash to the bank, vigilance and common sense are required. Consider the following:**

- For business owners, the safety of employees is paramount. Use of a cash transporting service, especially when large amounts of monies are involved, is strongly recommended.
- If employees are utilized to transport deposits, it is recommended that they have a criminal record check, be properly trained in cash transport procedures and robbery response, be comfortable with the duty and have access to a mobile telephone.
- Company uniforms should not be worn or if they are worn, they should be covered by other clothing items. Any badges should be removed from uniforms that could identify the person as store staff.
- Use ordinary looking shopping bags or a properly constructed cash carrying bag specifically designed to carry money.
- Do not place money, cheques etc. into a handbag, bank bag or bag that identifies the store.
- Vary the route and times of bank deposit trips – do not follow a pattern.
- Be alert at all times to persons and /or vehicles following and take note of description details
- Do not make any unnecessary stops on the way to the bank.
- Watch for suspicious persons and vehicles and report observations including descriptions, to the Wood Buffalo RCMP at 780-788-4040.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

- All staff involved in cash handling should be regularly trained in correct cash handling techniques.
- All office staff, including those not involved in cash handling, should be regularly trained in the procedures to be followed in the event of a robbery/ armed robbery taking place.

# DESCRIPTION FORM

If you or your establishment are the victim of an offence, please complete this form.

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

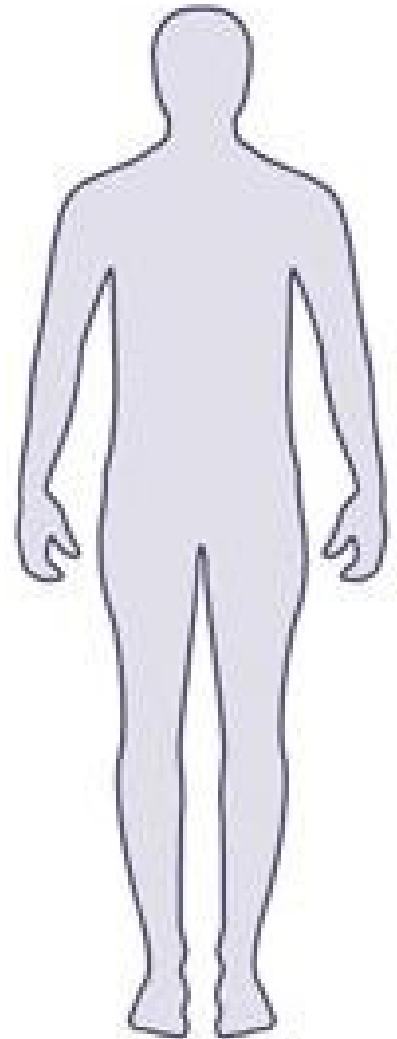
Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Responding Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Responding Officer's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ @rcmp-grc.gc.ca

<b>SUSPECTS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Gender			
Height			
Build			
Age			
Hair Color			
Facial Hair			
Complexion			
Eye Color			
Accent/Race			
Disguise			
Scars/Tattoos			
Head Wear			
Glasses			
Shirt/Jacket			
Pants/Dress			
Clothing Logos			
Shoes/Boots			
Purse/Kit Bag			



# DESCRIPTION FORM

Circle the make/type/color of the vehicle.

If not listed, please add in the blank space provided.

Vehicle Make	Type	Color
Ford	2 door	Red
Toyota	4 door	White
Chrysler	Van	Black
Honda	Hatchback	Dark Blue
GMC	Jeep	Light Blue
Chevrolet	Truck (2 door)	Silver
Mazda	Truck (4 door)	Green
BMW	Motorcycle	Purple
Audi		Gold
Dodge		Grey
Jeep		

Vehicle Plate Number:

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Car Accessories (roof rack, spoiler, tinted windows, window decals):

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Other (damage, dents, etc.):

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