

Robbery Prevention Tips

Every business owner, manager and employee plays a part in making businesses safe. Here are some things you can do to help prevent robbery:

- Have at least two employees open and close the business.
- Do not release personal information to strangers.
- Keep purses and personal valuables locked in desks or lockers.
- Install a robbery alarm.
- Place a surveillance camera behind the cash register facing the front counter. Replace videotapes regularly.
- Vary times and routes of travel for bank deposits.
- Don't use marked "moneybags" that make it obvious to would-be robbers you are carrying money for deposit.
- Keep a low balance in the cash register.
- Place excess money in a safe or deposit it as soon as possible.
- Cooperate with the robber for your own safety and the safety of others. Comply with a robber's demands. Remain calm and think clearly. Make mental notes of the robber's physical description and other observations important to law enforcement officers.
- If you have a silent alarm and can reach it without being noticed, use it. Otherwise, wait until the robber leaves.
- Be careful, most robbers are just as nervous as you are.
- Keep your business neat and clean. A tidy, orderly place of business is inviting to customers, but not to robbers. Dressing neatly also sends the right message.
- Stay alert! Know who is in your business and where they are. Watch for people who hang around without buying anything. Also, be aware of suspicious activity outside your place of business. Write down license numbers of suspicious vehicles if visible from the inside of your business.
- Make sure the sales counter can be seen clearly. Don't put up advertisements, flyers, displays, signs, posters or other items on windows or doors that might obstruct the view of the register from inside or outside your business. The police cruising by your store need to see in.
- Try to greet customers as they enter your business. Look them in the eye, and ask them if they need help. Your attention can discourage a robber.
- Keep your business well-lit, inside and outside. Employees should report any burned-out lights to the business owner or manager. Keep trees and bushes trimmed, so they don't block any outdoor lights.
- Encourage the police to stop by your business.
- Learn the names of the officers who patrol your business.

- Use care after dark. Be cautious when cleaning the parking lot or taking out the trash at night. Make sure another employee inside the business keeps you within eye contact while you are involved in work details outside of your building.
- If you see something suspicious, call the police. Never try to handle it yourself. It could cost you your life.
- Handle cash carefully. Avoid making your business a tempting target for robbers. Keep the amount of cash in registers low. Drop all large bills right away. If a customer tries to pay with a large bill, politely ask if he or she has a smaller one. Explain that you keep very little cash on hand.
- Use only one register at night. Leave other registers empty and open. Tilt the register drawer to show there is no money in it.
- Leave blinds and drapes partially open during closing hours.
- Make sure important signs stay posted. For example, the front door should bear signs that say, "Clerk Cannot Open the Time Lock Safe."
- If your business is robbed put your safety first. Your personal safety is more important than money or merchandise.
- Don't talk except to answer the robber's questions.
- Don't stare directly at the robber.
- Prevent surprises, keep your hands in sight at all times.
- Don't make any sudden moves.
- Tell the robber if someone is coming out of the back room or vault or working in another area of your business.
- Don't chase or follow the robber out of your place of business.
- Leave the job of catching the robber to the police.

If you have any questions or would like a business premise survey, contact East Side Crime Prevention Officer Steve Parsons at 651-266-5740.