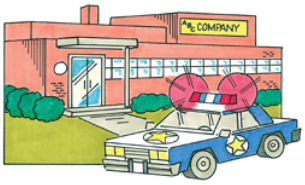
WORKPLACE SECURITY



In the past, security personnel were concerned with things like the theft of the facility's equipment or computer hackers breaking through the computer system's firewall and planting computer viruses. While these types of crimes are still a concern, employers have new security risks to deal with these days.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Security breaches can result in threats, violence, injury, illness, property loss, or business shut-downs.

In order to keep employees, clients, and visitors safe, employers and employees must be alert for various types of serious security risks:

- Penetration of secure areas.
- Assaults.
- Theft of hazardous materials or other property.
- Chemical and biological terrorism.
- Misuse of classified materials.

START WITH PARKING LOT SECURITY

When you enter an employee parking lot, remember to think of your own personal security and safety. While there are no one criteria for determining "safe" parking spots, try to park:

- Where you can see for a distance around your vehicle.
- Where you can be seen (a highly visible location).
- In busy areas of the lot, close to the building entrance or public walkways, if possible.

Frequently, parking spaces are marked for employee- or visitor-only use. These procedures help to identify employees and persons who may not belong in the facility. Whenever you witness suspicious activity in a parking lot or garage, or if you notice a vehicle that is out of place or appears abandoned, promptly report it to police personnel.

Parking lots

Outdoor, ground-level parking lots are safer if they are:

- Well-lit and highly-visible.
- Fenced to limit access (fenced, gated, and guarded if necessary).

- Patrolled, especially at night.

Going to and from your vehicle

Before you get out of your locked automobile, scan the area around the vehicle. Are there any suspicious people in the immediate area? If so, move to another parking spot.

When you exit your vehicle:

- Quickly move toward the building entrance, scanning the area in front of you for suspicious people and behavior.
- Walk in well-lit areas.
- Stay alert, and if a suspicious person does approach, change directions and head for a safe area.
- Use a security alarm if you are threatened.

When you leave the building and return to your vehicle:

- Ask for a security escort if this service is available.
- Scan the area around your vehicle as you approach.
- Approach your vehicle with care; have your keys ready.
- If something appears out of the ordinary, or if you see a suspicious person approaching; stop, and go back into the building or other safe area. Contact security or call the police.

SECURITY MEASURES INSIDE THE FACILITY

Just because you've made it safely inside the workplace, you shouldn't let your guard down. If your organization has relatively few employees, you may know everyone who works there. But, your workplace may be just too large and spread out for employees to be able to recognize everyone who is authorized to be inside. Or, your business may work with the public or other clients who come and go throughout the day.

Watch for people or other employees:

- Attempting to access something that is normally denied them, such as: classified materials, chemicals, hazardous materials, or admission to prohibited or secure areas.
- Behaving in a strange manner.
- Making unusual requests or demands.
- Carrying a weapon (unless they are authorized to do so).

Report suspicious activities to the police department.

CAN WE SEE SOME IDENTIFICATION?

One security measure that is often overlooked is proper identification for employees. The City requires employees to wear identification badges or carry identification cards. The City IDs have the employee's picture, along with his or her name and department, on the badge. This is the most effective way to determine if the person belongs in the building. It also is good deterrent to the theft of the ID.

Never allow just anyone into your workplace. It is good policy to require each employee to use his or her own ID to enter the building. If your ID card is lost or stolen, immediately report this to the Human Resources office.

MAIL ROOM SECURITY

Employees in the mail room are at risk of being directly exposed to threats from outside of your organization. Mail room employees need to know how to recognize potential threats and take extra precautions.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has issued an advisory detailing what you should do if you receive a suspicious letter or package:

1. Handle with care. Do not shake or bump the item.
2. Isolate and look for indicators:
    - No return address.
    - Restrictive marking such as "PERSONAL."
    - Excessive postage (could have been mailed from a foreign country).
    - Misspelled words.
    - Bad handwriting or typing.
    - Wrong title with name.
    - Addresses to a title only or an incorrect title.
    - Protruding wires.
    - Item is lopsided or uneven.
    - A strange odor.
    - Oily stains, discolorations, or crystallization on wrapper.
    - Excessive tape or string.

If a parcel is open and/or a threat is identified:

- For a bomb:

    - Evacuate immediately.
    - Call Oviedo Police (911).

- For a radiological threat:

    - Limit exposure to the item and don't handle it.
    - Evacuate the area.
    - Shield yourself from the object.
    - Call Oviedo Police (911).

- For a biological or chemical threat:

    - Isolate the item and don't handle it.
    - Call Oviedo Police (911).
    - Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

WORK AT WORKING SAFELY

Having some fear is normal and helps people remain vigilant, but there are many precautions both employers and employees can take to help ensure a secure workplace where risks are reduced.

1. Take personal safety and security precautions in parking lots and garages.
2. Follow all secure entry policies and procedures.
3. Report suspicious activities in the workplace.
4. Always wear or carry your ID in the workplace.
5. Report lost or stolen employee ID badges.
6. Know what actions to take if you receive a suspicious package.