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Know your security risks – inside and out

Common sense steps that can protect your business

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According to the National Sheriff's Association, 30 percent of small business failure is attributed to burglary, robbery, shoplifting and fraud. These security risks not only exist outside your business, they can also come from inside. An electronic access control system is an important part of keeping your business secure because it allows you to keep track of who goes where and when. In the event of a crime, your electronic access control system can help you pinpoint who was in the business during the time the crime occurred, narrowing your list of suspects and aiding the police in an investigation. But there are also some common sense steps you can take to protect your company.

Start from the inside
Screen your people: Use background checks and call references to screen potential employees to help protect against theft from inside your organization.

Train your staff regularly: Make sure all your staff knows how to use your security systems/procedures and be sure to review training if there are any changes in the system. You may also need to provide training for contractors who service your office, such as a cleaning crew. Be sure to have a full trained back-up person in place in case you are ill or absent and your system requires management of any kind.

Keep cash to a minimum: If you have a business that conducts financial transactions, like a restaurant or retail shop, keep a safe on the premises and make regular transfers from your cash registers into the safe throughout business hours. This keeps cash-on-hand to a minimum. Limit the number of people with access to the safe for even more protection.

Keep accurate records: Keep detailed and up-to-date records of cash flow, inventory, equipment and supplies and have the list checked on a regular basis by someone other than the person charged with maintaining it.

Invest in effective access control: Safely and effectively managing access will be much easier if you have the right security products in place. At the very minimum you may want to invest in a high security key system so that you monitor who has keys for your building.

Stay current on access control: When employees or contractors are hired or leave the business act quickly to update alarm codes, electronic lock access codes, keys or other credentials to prevent unauthorized access to your building or office.

Add video surveillance: Video surveillance can easily be integrated into your access control system and delivers an invaluable, visual record of who went where and when. In the event of a crime, video surveillance records are far more accurate than they human eye or memory. Visible video surveillance also acts as a crime deterrent and can assure your customers and employees that their safety is your first priority.

Act quickly if a theft occurs: Should someone inside your company commit a theft or other crime contact law enforcement immediately and follow through on appropriate charges or actions. This sends the message to your other employees that their safety is a priority and that illegal actions will not be tolerated.

Evaluate the outside too
Making sure employees feel safe and secure in their everyday surroundings is an important part of maintaining a productive workplace. The same protections and preventive measures that you might provide employees will also help create a sense of safety and security that your clients or customers will appreciate. There are many actions you can take now that don't require a large financial investment, but will make a big difference.

Get to know your neighbors: Be aware of who works in your building, on your floor or next door – this will make it easier to recognize who belongs there and who doesn't. Familiarize yourself with others' business hours and traffic patterns, which can also help you spot potential danger.

Make your office easy to find: Be sure your address can easily be seen from the street and is visible at night. If you are part of a large complex, check the directory or other lobby signage to make sure your company name and suite number are correct.

Maintain safe landscaping: Keep bushes near windows and doors at less than 42" tall and make entry to your roof difficult be pruning trees to less than 7' or removing those that would enable access to the roof.

Keep your building or office well lit: Install motion-detecting lights outside and consider lighting the interior after hours, as well. This discourages break-ins and vandalism.

Stay on top of maintenance: If your building is vandalized make repairs or clean up as quickly as possible. Keep doors, windows, siding/brick, sidewalks, etc. in good repair to show that the building is used often and attended to carefully.

Invest in the best security system you can afford: Whether it's a high-security key system or networked electronic access control with video surveillance, implement and use the best security your business can afford. Make sure your employees know how it works and use it consistently.

Access control can be simple and affordable. Choose a solution that puts you in the driver's seat, managing security that works for you and your business. With the right security in place you can protect your business from the inside and out, leaving you free to focus on what you do best.

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Learn more about security risks

For more information about security risks and how to avoid them, please contact a professional security consultant in your area by calling **888.758.9823** or fill out the **Contact Us** form on our website at allegion.com.

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