



Ukiah Police Department

Safety, Professionalism, Community Service

Chris Dewey

Chief of Police

-UKIAH POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME PREVENTION-

CONSTRUCTION SITE CRIME PREVENTION

Construction sites are frequently victimized by theft of machinery and equipment, tools and material supplies. Because these sites vary so much, different job sites require protective measures and programs. The following are a series of crime prevention recommendations designed to minimize or reduce the theft of property from the construction job site.

Before Breaking Ground

It is advisable to inform the Ukiah Police Department about any large scale project. Details to include are type of construction, work schedule, names of key personnel and key contact numbers for both during and after work hours. Additionally, the dates of which the project shall begin and the anticipated completion date.

Delivery of critical material and unusual job site activities are also important to know. Let the police know how the equipment is marked for identification. Invite a police representative to assist you with a crime prevention survey of the site so that the vulnerabilities can be identified.

Company Crime Prevention/Loss Prevention Coordinator

The general contractor or construction Management Company should designate an employee as the company crime prevention/loss prevention coordinator. This should be someone who has management level communication and multi-job site mobility. This should be an individual who has an awareness of the possible problems that could arise and an approach to combating those problems. All construction site losses should be immediately reported to this individual



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and this individual should also be made aware of construction workers knowledge and concerns of site vulnerabilities. This individual should also have the responsibility of educating job site workers as to the steps being taken to prevent loss or theft. A zero tolerance policy for employee misconduct or risky practices should be communicated and enforced. Any thefts should be reported to the Ukiah Police Department non-emergency number at 463-6262 or 911 for a life-threatening or in progress emergency.

Identify Assets and Property

All assets on a construction site should be identified (marked), inventoried (records), and tracked as closely as practical. A company identification numbering system should be developed. Corporate equipment should have some type of recognizable logo/advertising prominently displayed. Employees should be required to have their own personal property engraved with an identification number that indicates ownership. Employees should maintain an awareness of all equipment, personal and company owned, that falls under their responsibility and the location and secure storage of this equipment when not in use.

Surveillance of the Job Site

The company Crime Prevention/Loss Prevention Coordinator should make sure that proper surveillance of the job site is done as much as possible. This could include forming a "site watch" method that would enlist the assistance of those involved or those nearby. This may include security personnel assigned to the site who rotate their location and actively listen and watch for suspicious activity. It may include enlisting the help of a nearby business to keep an eye out when they are open, or perhaps the new residents who have taken occupancy before the whole neighborhood is completed. The idea is to have in place as many watchful eyes as possible. Those helping out in this manner should be instructed on when, how and who to call to report a possible problem. You may want to post signs saying there is a "site watch" in effect as a possible deterrent to thieves and trespassers.

Signing for Deliveries Requires Serious Attention

A standard procedure for checking material on and off the job site should be established and followed.

- One person could be assigned the responsibility of maintaining a tight inventory control of all materials and tools delivered. Deliveries should be accepted after carefully checking the invoice for shortages.
- Critical material should not be stored on the job site any longer than necessary. Whenever possible, time the deliveries of high value material or of critical importance for the time closest to when they are actually needed.



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- Materials and equipment should be spot checked frequently. Empty cartons should not be allowed to accumulate as they can easily be filled with items that can be concealed and illegally removed from the job site. Supervise as many trash removal, container removal, etc., activities as possible. Good warning to those with bad ideas.

Supervisory Personnel Should Control Keys

Limit the number of individuals who have key control and access. The company crime prevention/loss prevention coordinator should maintain a record of issued keys. Included in this record should be the type of key issued, to whom, on what date and for what purpose. Unissued keys should be kept secured and extra keys should be kept to a minimum. Keys should not be hidden on the job site and key control numbers should be removed from padlocks. To prevent unauthorized duplication, keys can be “plugged” with a rivet through the bow as a means of preventing alignment needed for machine duplication. Spot checks to ensure the keys are still with the assigned individual are a good idea. Any lost or stolen key should be reported immediately.

Gate Access

Gates to the site should be kept to a minimum. Secure installation and security locks are necessary. Weaknesses in the fencing should be reported and corrected when discovered. Chain link fencing should not be considered security fencing, but rather a territorial and off-limits indicator. Where vehicle access is possible, unknown vehicles should be challenged and care should be given to notice those parked nearby who may just be watching the activity. Known vehicles could be periodically checked as a theft prevention measure. All access gates should be closed and locked at night and on weekends.

Secure Tools and Equipment when Not in Use

Storage sheds or fenced areas should be provided at the job site for a more secure method of storing tools and equipment. When vehicular equipment is not in use, their cabs should be locked and the ignition key removed and kept elsewhere. Metal shields on equipment windows can reduce vandalism. Oil and gas tank caps should be locked. Machines can be disabled with hidden ignition cutout switches.



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Construction equipment should be engraved or marked in at least two obvious and one hidden spots. Use a hardened steel punch or etching tool to mark the serial numbers on the equipment. Report the loss of construction equipment to the police immediately.

Lighting the Construction Job Site

The effective use of lighting can be an excellent deterrent to theft and vandalism at the site. Lighted areas should include the office trailer(s), equipment storage trailer(s), material storage yard and any equipment storage areas. Ideally these areas should be visible from the most heavily traveled road bordering the construction job site.

Lighting systems triggered by a motion detector may give the impression that intrusion has been detected. Lighting that is on all night in some areas may be a deterrent as well. Criminals seek darkness and areas where they can easily conceal their bad deeds and their coming/goings. Light fixtures should be positioned so they are not easily reachable from the ground and should be periodically checked for proper placement and coverage.

Alarms

Alarm systems can be an effective means of providing an extra layer of protection for office and storage trailers, etc. Portable alarm systems are available that will detect motion, activate lights and sound alarms. Audible alarms tell the intruder they have been detected and it also alerts those nearby of this activity. Having a monitoring station may increase your chances of being notified of a possible problem, so be sure to know the exact address of the site and the location of the alarms contained within that site.

Security Companies and Guard Dogs

Security companies vary in services offered and quality of service given. Credible, licensed, bonded and insured companies are recommended. Additionally, a company that has guards with construction site experience may be helpful. Recommendations from satisfied customers may be asked for as well. The guard service should be asked to patrol the interior and exterior of the site, make sure the lighting in place is working properly and that the fencing has not been defeated. A good working relationship with reliable guard service can be worth the expense if the desired results are achieved. The crime prevention/loss prevention coordinator should maintain contact with the guard service to ensure the security function is being done as requested.

Guard dogs are typically not recommended for a variety of reasons.



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Additional Tips

- Develop sound crime prevention/loss prevention policies and practices.
- Educate all key personnel on the same. Train your employees on what to be on the lookout for and what information is important to take notice of – vehicle descriptions, license plates, person descriptions, etc.
- Allow an open-door policy so those with concerns can report them.
- Discuss the consequences of theft and other crimes at employee meetings/gatherings. Make sure the companies stance and intention to report and prosecute is well known.
- Ensure proper signs are in place for “No Trespassing”, and other area specific restrictions.
- Have a dialogue with others in your company/industry to ensure you are doing all you can to reduce your incidents of crime.
- Develop a Crime/Incident Form that allows you to record situations of importance. Even if it is just for having a record of an incident it is important to have a specific form that applies to a variety of situations.
- **DO NOT ALTER OR DISTURB A POTENTIAL CRIME SCENE. REPORT THE CRIME TO THE POLICE AND SECURE THE AREA UNTIL THEY ARRIVE.**

This information has been provided as a guideline for your use. Please consider industry best practices as you develop a specific plan for your site(s). Adjust your plan to the needs of a particular site, but do have consistent guidelines and protocol. You are the best resource when it comes to recognizing past incidents and how to implement processes that may reduce future incidents. The time spent on the front end of prevention will be well worth it as the incidents of crime decrease and the costs associated with theft/crime do not cut into your budget or cause project delays. Remember also that no one wants to create a job site where crime is easy to commit. Nothing encourages criminal behavior like a lack of checks and balances, oversight, or target hardening. Be preventative and make it known. Build crime prevention into your projects!



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-UKIAH POLICE DEPARTMENT CONSTRUCTION THEFT GUIDELINES-

“PREVENT CONSTRUCTION THEFT OR LIMIT THIS ACTIVITY”

11 GUIDELINES TO INCLUDE AT YOUR SITE/LOCATION

1. Know who belongs on your job site. Be aware of who is there and who visits.
2. Question anyone or anything that seems suspicious. Don't ignore potential problems.
3. Tag, mark and inventory everything. Make it known that inventory is kept.
4. Hire quality on-site security. Consider video surveillance when it is feasible.
5. Utilize tracking devices or services. Technology enhances prevention and protection.
6. Offer rewards for information. Be vocal about efforts to prevent theft.
7. Enlist the aid of nearby neighbors – commercial or residential.
8. Report thefts immediately to the police. Maintain accurate information for reporting.
9. Provide police current emergency contact information for your site and personnel.
10. Improve and enhance communications with trusted employees. Promote accountability and responsibility.
11. Prosecute an offender – employee or otherwise. Maintain a “zero tolerance” policy.

The above guidelines will help reduce the incidents and opportunities for construction related theft. Consider implementation and continue to expand on these guidelines as they apply to your needs. Seek industry best practices.