



Victim Services
Nelson Police Department & Nelson RCMP

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BUSINESS SECURITY

Your business is very important to you and to Nelson Police Department. There are many steps you can take to ensure your business premises remain safer and more secure.

List of Top 10 Security Tips for Businesses

1. Install a monitored alarm system.
2. Used video surveillance as a deterrent.
3. Ensure all entry points are secure with quality locks.
4. Keep the premises well-lit, especially during off-hours.
5. Display anti-theft signs prominently.
6. Keep valuable items locked or within sight of staff.
7. Leave cash register open, empty and visible from outside after hours.
8. Conduct background checks on employees handling cash.
9. Implement a cash management policy to reduce on-site cash amounts.
10. Train staff on security protocols and emergency procedure.

Be aware and alert of your surroundings:

- Greet everyone who enters your store, make eye contact with them if at all possible.
- Know who visits your business and the purpose of their visit – pay close attention to people who ask about the operations of your business, security procedures, shift changes etc.
- Be mindful of people who carry backpacks or large bags in your store and wear a hat or glasses to potentially disguise their appearance.
- Fitting rooms and bathrooms should be watched at all times. Limit the number of items taken into the fitting room and don't allow unpaid merchandise in the restroom.
- Consider limiting washroom use to customers only and know the location of the nearest public washroom.
- Shoplifters tend to look around for cameras and clerks. They often hide items in their sleeves, boots or socks – they may bend down to tie their shoes more than once, fidget with their cuffs, hitch up their pants or rearrange their clothing frequently. They often wear bulky or out of season clothing. Consider incorporating a retail loss prevention system with retail anti-theft tags for tracking inventory.
- Ensure staff are aware of emergency exit routes. Employees should never compromise their own personal safety, in the event of a theft do not chase after the thief.

- Train staff to take in details and report any concerns to the Nelson Police Department non-emergency line at 250-354-3919.

Visibility:

- People are less likely to commit a crime if they can be seen easily.
- Place your checkout counter near the front of the store so employees can easily monitor inside and outside. Make sure your cash register is inaccessible to customers and monitored at all times.
- Keep window blinds open during the day and keep window signs to a minimum. A general rule is to cover no more than 10% of your business window with signage.
- Consider shorter shelving units making it easier for staff to detect theft.
- If you cannot see all four walls consider installing convex mirrors or cameras to help you see all areas of your business.

Lighting:

- Make sure inside areas are well lit - people will feel safer inside and make your business less of a target for crime.
- Leave the lights on during closing hours so any activity inside can be easily viewed.
- LED lights work well if you have a camera security system as they increase visibility.
- Outside - keep entryways, main walkways, back alleys, parking lots and corners where people like to mingle, well lit.
- Consider motion lights at the back of your business.
- Protect lights from vandalism by mounting them out of reach and using a mesh shield.
- Make sure trees and shrubs are well trimmed and don't block any lighting.
- Installing security gates is one of the most effective ways to prevent illegal entry to commercial property during non-business hours. Swing gates, barrier gates, lift gates and sliding gates are some of the several designs of gates available.

Security alarm systems and video surveillance:

- Consider a monitored alarm.
- Video surveillance is a helpful deterrent. Make sure your staff are trained on the use of the systems and retain recordings for a minimum of 30 days.
- Change alarm codes when an employee leaves your business.
- The City of Nelson does not require a permit to install a security alarm. However, any modifications to a business to install an alarm may require a permit and it would be prudent to discuss that with the City of Nelson Development Services at 250-352-8260.

Lock your property:

- Make sure rear and side entrances stay securely locked.
- Check that all the doors and windows are secure at closing time – every day.
- Use deadbolts with a minimum 1-inch bolt and a saw resistant insert on all exterior doors.
- Use a sign out method for keys and collect them when employees leave your business.
- Adhere to the City of Nelson fire code when considering securing your business premises.

Premises:

- Ensure your address is clearly marked on both the front and rear of your building. A clean, uncluttered, neatly landscaped and well-maintained business deters crime and makes patrons feel welcome. If a business looks run down it could be considered an easy target.
- Schedule cleaning staff at night when vandalism is more likely to occur.
- Repair any damage or graffiti as soon as possible.
- Keep your alley free of any discarded trash and recycled items.
- Post proper signage for parking which clearly indicates private property.
- If you do have a break in, call 911 and do not enter your business. There is a chance someone could remain in the building or evidence may accidentally be destroyed.

Hazard:

- If you find used or new sharp exposed items, for example needle tips, don't bag them, simply call the City of Nelson Fire Department at 250 352-3103 and they will attend to pick the sharp item up. If you are accidentally pricked with a needle, wash the area with soap and water and go to the nearest ER for medical attention. For any drug paraphernalia – cookers, stems or pipes, do not call the City of Nelson Fire Department to dispose of it, don work or rubber gloves, pick the items up, double bag and tie off and dispose of in the garbage. Wash your hands well.
- Ankors in Nelson may also be contacted, during business hours (9-5) for safe disposal of found needles or drug paraphernalia. Ankors – 250-505-5506.
- If you find human feces on your business premises unfortunately this is the responsibility of the business to remove and sanitize however it is strongly recommended that this be done using personal protective equipment. If human feces are located on public property, for example City of Nelson back alleys, call the City of Nelson Public Works Dept at 250-352-8238 for assistance.
- Consider connecting with Nelson Community Services Street Outreach Team if your business or employees are facing challenges that involve community members who are experiencing homelessness, and/or issues with substance use and mental health. The team is made up of three part-time street outreach workers, and a program manager. The training includes Mental Health First Aid, Basic First Aid/CPR, Assessment, Case Management, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Privacy/Info. sharing, Drug Information, Naloxone, Mental Health and Substance Use, Health Precautions & Personal Safety. Please call or text Nelson Street Outreach at 250-777-3993 (Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:00pm).

Loss prevention:

- Display anti-theft signs and keep valuable items locked or in sight of staff and away from windows. Limit the number of valuable items an employee can remove from a locked case at one time.
- Track inventory regularly.
- Remove large bills from the register when counting cash at shift change.
- When closing remove all money and leave your cash drawer empty, open and visible from the outside.

Aggressive panhandling around your business:

- Tell those panhandling you carry no money on the premises and call the Nelson Police Department at 250-354-3919 for assistance. If you require urgent and immediate assistance always call 911.

- Watch to make sure you are not followed when you leave.

If you would like further assistance to discuss safety and security on your business premises, please contact the Nelson Police Department Community Constable at 250-354-3919, ext. 655 or Nelson Police Department Victim Services at 250-505-5657 or visit the website at www.nelsonpolice.ca