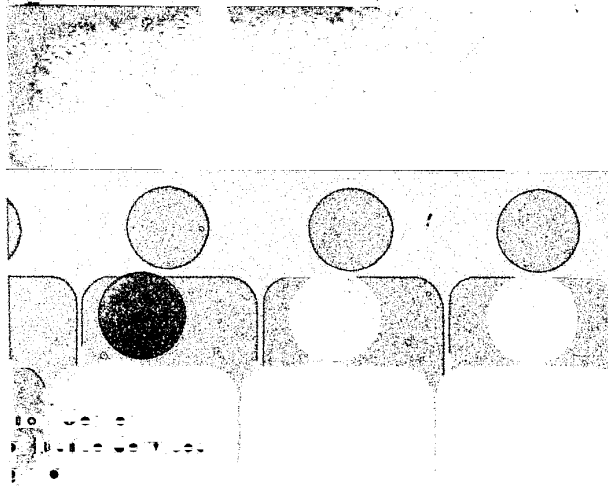


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Crime Prevention Guide for Business and Industry Table of Contents

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Virginia Crime Prevention Center
Department of Criminal Justice Services
Commonwealth of Virginia

Introduction

Each year, approximately 230,000 serious crimes are reported to Virginia's law enforcement agencies. They include murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft and arson.

As a result of these offenses, 400 or more Virginians lose their lives, several thousand suffer serious physical and/or psychological damages and 100 to 125 million dollars worth of property is reported stolen.

Typically, law enforcement will make an arrest in approximately 25% of the major crimes reported to them and recover roughly 33% of the property reported stolen. However, when motor vehicles are removed from the stolen and recovered category, only about 11% of all other property is recovered.

We are fortunate that property crimes in Virginia have actually decreased in recent years. One reason for this trend is the prevention efforts of law enforcement and the community. A recent survey conducted by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services revealed that approximately 170 law enforcement agencies provide services which are aimed at making citizens aware of the threat of crime and then suggesting ways in which it can be prevented. The survey also found that as many as 300,000 Virginia households are participating in just one crime prevention program, Neighborhood Watch. In light of that level of participation, it is not surprising that burglary has decreased in each of the last four years.

In 1980, 63,896 burglaries were reported to Virginia law enforcement agencies with an accompanying loss of property valued at \$46,768,556. In 1984, law enforcement agencies reported 47,436 burglaries with property stolen valued at \$30,953,975.

In Norfolk, the police report that burglary in Neighborhood Watch areas decreased 30.8% in 1984, while it increased 5.4% in areas not participating in the program.

The key point is that, contrary to what many believe, crime is not inevitable; much of it is preventable. There are even studies indicating that as much as 40% of all residential burglaries occur where windows and doors are left unlocked. Therefore, the challenge is to make citizens aware of the threat of crime and then provide them with the know-how to prevent it; this is a challenge in places of business as well as in homes.

If crime is to be prevented, it is necessary for the entire community to work towards that end. Although crime prevention is the responsibility of each individual homeowner and business, it also must be a collective effort of law enforcement,

community groups and organizations, schools, churches and, of course, business and industry.

To a great extent, business and industry are the keys to making a large segment of the population aware of the need to prevent crime. Even though there are some excellent examples of their involvement in this effort, for the most part, businesses have not seized upon the opportunity for providing services which enhance employee safety and security at the worksite, at home and while traveling to and from work. Many crime prevention experts contend that the business community is the missing link in community efforts to prevent crime.

The purpose of this guide is to acquaint businesses with the various opportunities for joining with others in the community to combat crime. Special emphasis is given to identifying services that will minimize employees' chances of being victimized. The guide also describes the benefits that are likely to accrue to the businesses that elect to provide crime prevention services to their employees.

1 Understanding Crime Prevention

Crime prevention is defined as "the anticipation, the recognition and the appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it."

Although crime prevention in its present form is a relatively recent development, it has been practiced by individuals and societies for centuries. For instance, probably one of the first acts of the settlers to this country was the construction of a stockade fence to prevent attacks by Indians. In so doing, the settlers certainly anticipated, recognized and appraised their risk and by constructing a barrier, took action to remove or reduce it.

It is commonly recognized that three variables must be present in order for a crime to occur; the desire of the criminal, his or her ability to commit the offense and the opportunity. If one of the three variables can be removed, there will be no crime. Crime prevention's goal is to remove the opportunity for crime.

There are many steps which individuals and communities can take to reduce or remove opportunities for crime. These are especially effective in light of the fact that most criminals are amateurs who simply seize upon opportunities presented to them, opportunities which occur far too often in many homes, schools and businesses.

Some of the most successful examples of preventing crime through the removal or reduction of opportunity include:

- Homes and businesses in one Northern Virginia county experienced a burglary rate four times less the county-wide rate when they implemented security measures recommended by the police department as part of its security inspection program.
- Direct deposits of certain government checks resulted in a reduction of \$20,000,000 in claims of lost or stolen checks in just one year.
- The rate of automobile thefts has remained fairly constant since the mid-sixties thanks to the manufacturers' installation of anti-theft devices.
- An exact fare requirement has all but eliminated robberies of buses in one Virginia city.
- Shoplifting of large ticketed merchandise has been greatly reduced in retail stores that deploy anti-shoplifting sensor tags.

- Concerned about the safety of customers in a poorly lit parking lot, one fast food restaurant drastically increased its lighting. Not only did security improve, but business also increased by 30%.

These examples are but a few of the many that can be documented. In addition, there are thousands of others that have occurred in businesses where some action or change in procedure reduced the opportunity for a crime.

2 Why Business and Industry?

As previously described, the key to preventing crime is to make the public aware of its threat and provide sufficient information to enable them to reduce the opportunity for it. Hence, it is essential that agencies and organizations with the capability actively promote the prevention of crime and provide appropriate services within their spheres of influence.

Of the many opportunities within a community to foster crime prevention, business and industry have the greatest potential for reaching large segments of the population. The decision by a business to offer crime prevention services to its employees can play an important role in making the community-at-large safer because the employees gain a greater awareness of the need to prevent crime.

At the same time, such a decision also can have a positive impact on business. Some of the more obvious benefits are:

- **Enhanced Security at the Worksite**—If business and industry attempt to educate employees about the need to prevent crime at home and while traveling to and from work, it is likely that their newly developed security habits will carry over to the worksite and they will be more inclined to safeguard company property and assets.
- **Improved Employee Morale**—In-house training sessions and the distribution of educational literature which describe how employees can enhance their security have the effect of improving the employees' attitude about their employers. Most employees will appreciate the fact that the services being provided are designed to improve their safety and security.
- **Improved Corporate Image**—The delivery of crime prevention services to employees and the community can result in a greater community awareness of the business and enhance its public image.
- **Increased Productivity**—If appropriate services are provided to workers, productivity increases, especially among working parents who are better informed as to how to enhance the safety of their children between the end of the school day and the time when they return home after the work day.

- **Reduction of Lost Work Time**—Annually, crime claims several hundred thousand victims in Virginia. In addition to the victim, the victim's entire family often suffers as the result of injury to a family member or theft of property. When an employee or a member of the family is victimized, it is likely that person will lose time from work or that concentration and productivity while at work will be diminished. If employee victimization can be reduced, the company benefits from a reduction in lost work time and increased productivity from a worker who otherwise might be trying to replace stolen property, dealing with the police and his/her insurance company or attending court.

3 Program Opportunities

For the most part, business and industry can provide crime prevention services to employees and enhance community crime prevention programming with only a modest expenditure of money and staff time. Companies with internal security and public relations capabilities have an added advantage in that staff and, to some extent, resources already exist to provide services.

Some of the services that companies may wish to consider include:

Employee Services

Informal Employee Training—Short training sessions can provide valuable crime prevention information to employees. Training sessions of this nature are not hard to organize and offer the opportunity for employees to ask questions and discuss their concerns. The lunch hour provides a convenient time. Many excellent films and other audio visual aids are available for rental or purchase so that the teaching portion of the program can be very brief. Often security personnel can serve as instructors, as can local police or sheriff's department officers or staff from the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The training sessions usually work best in the context of an overall education campaign; distribution of brochures; placement of posters; and articles in the company newsletter. To be successful, crime prevention education must be intensely promoted.

Distribute Crime Prevention Literature—One of the most effective ways to educate employees on how they can reduce the opportunity for crime is through the development and distribution of brochures and other hand-out material. Although companies may wish to design and print their own distinctive material, they may borrow print negatives from the National Crime Prevention Council, promoters of the McGruff and Take A Bite Out Of Crime campaign. The Council also has available for sale camera-ready materials to which a company can add its own name before printing. The address of the Council can be found in the resource section of this guide.

Publish Crime Prevention Articles and Tips—Camera-ready copy for articles, mailers and advertisements can be used in internal publications, mailed to employees and customers, posted on bulletin boards and internally distributed. Ideally, the topics of the articles and tips should relate to the needs of the

employees. For instance, if thefts from vehicles in the parking lot are a problem, then tips should advise the employee to store valuables in the trunk and lock their doors. Some of the more common topics include: office security, safety while traveling, home security and preventing sexual assault. Articles about these and other topics can be obtained from the National Crime Prevention Council in a camera-ready format.

Stimulate Participation in Operation I.D.—Operation Identification has proven to be a well-accepted, simple and successful way to help reduce burglaries and thefts. Operation I.D. involves marking personal property with an engraved identification number and posting Operation I.D. warning decals near entrances to the home. In Virginia, law enforcement officials suggest using the prefix VA followed by the social security number. Businesses can encourage employees and customers to participate in Operation Identification by publicizing the program, and providing engravers on a loan basis.

Crime Prevention Displays and Film Fairs—It is helpful to supplement activities with live demonstrations of crime prevention hardware and techniques. Some approaches are: Ask local law enforcement or state crime prevention organizations to set up exhibits in heavily traveled areas within the company. The lobby or hallway outside the lunch room is a good place, and there are many others. The exhibits can be staffed or not, but should be set up to help people understand the applications and uses of the various items. (If commercial organizations are involved in the exhibits, a direct sales approach should be discouraged. If people want to buy the items, they can visit the displayer's store. The purpose of the displays should be educational.) Set up a film fair in a room convenient to the lunchtime traffic pattern. Films may be obtained from local law enforcement and shown to employees during a one or two week period. Provide live demonstrations of prevention methods such as self-defense techniques.

Bulk Purchase of Security and Fire Safety Equipment—One way to encourage employees to practice crime (and fire) prevention and to provide them with a direct economic benefit at the same time is to use the purchasing power of the company to obtain bulk purchase discounts on standard hardware items such as deadbolt locks and smoke detectors. If most employees live in the same community, the company may be able to arrange quantity discounts for installation of locks.

Services by Law Enforcement Crime Prevention Officers—Local police agencies should be contacted to determine whether or not they have trained crime prevention personnel to help develop a crime prevention education program. Employees

should be encouraged to contact their local departments for information on crime prevention programs such as child safety, drug abuse, Operation I.D., home security surveys, or for help in setting up a Neighborhood Watch program. Crime prevention personnel are glad to work with companies that request their services, in addition to helping employees as individuals.

Helping Employees Who Are Victims—Security professionals in a company know about the stress of victimization. This knowledge should be shared with employees who are in doubt about what to do if they are victimized. How should the crime be reported? What happens if they testify? What are the requirements of Virginia's victim compensation program? The Department of Criminal Justice Services promotes a statewide Victim-Witness program and can serve as a valuable resource to address these questions as well as others. In-house, corporate resources such as counselors, medical staff, and insurance benefit advisors also can help crime victims. Referrals to community victim service agencies are important to the employee.

Employee Incentive Program—Most people appreciate recognition for their efforts. Consider ways to encourage, acknowledge, and reward suggestions made by employees for the prevention of potential losses or criminal activity in or outside the workplace. Such recognition reinforces the corporation's reputation for fostering and endorsing crime and loss prevention actions.

Community Services

Encourage Employees to Participate in Neighborhood Watch and Other Community Programs—Through many of the services described above, businesses can encourage employees to work with local law enforcement to form Neighborhood Watch groups in their neighborhoods. If company employees are part of a Neighborhood Watch committee, they may need time off to plan the watch organization with law enforcement.

Program Resources—Notify the local chief or sheriff that your company supports efforts to prevent crime and, because of its commitment, is willing to assist with appropriate resources. For instance, you may elect to provide a facility for a community crime prevention meeting, man audio-visual equipment, purchase a film or slide/tape program, print literature or provide other needed resources or services such as artwork, photography, public relations, etc.

Donate Obsolete Equipment—As office furniture, typewriters and other items of equipment are replaced, contact the local crime prevention program to determine if they can make use of the property.

Assist Law Enforcement to Develop Crime Prevention Committees—Crime prevention councils or committees have proven to be an excellent means to bring together law enforcement and concerned community and business leaders to plan and implement community-wide crime prevention services. A company representative may wish to contact the chief or sheriff and encourage the formation of such a committee. If one currently exists, the representative may volunteer the company as a member of the council.

Assistance in Obtaining Funds—Occasionally, local programs need more funds than they have available and may need to turn to business and industry for funding assistance. If a company cannot provide such assistance perhaps it could refer the program to a business-related association or organization that may be interested in considering the request.

Source: *A Corporate Action Guide: Employee and Community Crime Prevention*, Published by the National Crime Prevention Council, 733 15th Street, N.W., Room 504, Washington D.C. 20005. Copies of the guide are available for purchase.

4 What Others Are Doing

Virginia is very fortunate to have a significant amount of involvement in crime prevention by business and industry. The programs highlighted below have been chosen because they represent the varied services that business and industry can provide to employees and the community.

- Central Fidelity Bank printed crime prevention messages on approximately 1.5 million bank envelopes. The envelopes featured McGruff and Take A Bite Out Of Crime and the messages dealt with home security and prevention tips for senior citizens.
- Prior to its merger, Norfolk and Western Railway embarked on a crime prevention education program for its 22,000 employees. The campaign encompassed the prevention of crime at home and at the worksite and included employee seminars, printing and distribution of a crime prevention booklet and messages in the company's magazine.
- In Waynesboro, the E. I. DuPont De Nemours Company was instrumental in assisting the local police department in establishing its crime prevention office. The company donated office furniture and made a contribution for the purchase of hand-out material. Plant management also encouraged employees to participate in community crime prevention programs. In return, the police department provided safety seminars for employees and offered security related design advice in the construction of a company owned recreational facility.
- Concerned about crime, the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce created a crime prevention committee comprised of area business leaders and law enforcement officials. The Committee concentrated its first year efforts on neighborhood crime. As a result, they developed a slide/tape program on neighborhood watch, purchased brochures, and worked with local communities to initiate neighborhood watch programs. The committee's second year program was directed at the prevention of retail crime.
- Southland Corporation achieved a drastic reduction in losses due to robbery at its 7-11 stores as a result of an aggressive employee education program. In addition to

concentrating on the prevention of crime against its retail stores, 7-11 provides employees with a great deal of information on how they can protect themselves at home, at the work site and traveling to and from work. The company also has been generous in its assistance to community crime fighting efforts and has printed hand-out material and made it available to the public.

These are just a few of the contributions that are being made by the business community to provide crime prevention services for their employees and, in some cases, the general public. There are countless other companies that have realized that they can contribute to their employees' well-being by making them aware of the various ways in which the opportunity for crime can be reduced.

5 Program Resources

Many companies that elect to provide services to their employees and the community will need some assistance with respect to planning and implementation. Regardless of the size of the business or its location in Virginia, assistance is readily available upon request.

Local Law Enforcement—The most logical place to begin in formulating plans for a program is your local law enforcement agency. Most have crime prevention programs and would welcome the opportunity to assist business and industry.

State Police—The Department of State Police is also active in promoting crime prevention and, like local law enforcement, is willing to provide assistance. For state police assistance, contact the nearest area office or Major C. M. Robinson, Department of State Police, P.O. Box 27472, Richmond, VA 23261. He can be reached by phone at (604) 323-2000.

Department of Criminal Justice Services—The Department of Criminal Justice Services is the state agency responsible for promoting and developing crime prevention programs statewide. The Department can either provide direct assistance or serve as a referral to other local, state and national organizations. The Department, through its Crime Prevention Center, publishes a Crime Prevention Resource Directory which contains a listing of all local and state programs and a description of the programs they provide. Inquiries about the Directory or program assistance should be directed to: Harold A. Wright, Department of Criminal Justice Services, 805 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219. He can be reached by phone at (804) 786-4000.

Virginia Crime Prevention Association—The Virginia Crime Prevention Association is the major crime prevention interest group in Virginia and has a membership representing law enforcement, criminal justice planning, security, business and industry, education, and service and civic organizations. Because of its diverse membership, it can provide a variety of services upon request. For further information or assistance contact: Betty K. Kennon, Administrative Assistant, P.O. Box 271, Ashland, Virginia 23005. She can be reached by phone at (804) 798-1227.

National Crime Prevention Council—The National Crime Prevention Council serves as staff for the Citizens Crime

Prevention Coalition and its McGruff, Take A Bite Out Of Crime campaign. The Council has developed copy ready material which can be localized by businesses and others. For further information or assistance, contact Mr. B. M. Gray, Director of Marketing and Special Projects, National Crime Prevention Council, The Woodward Building, 733 15th Street, N. W., Washington D.C. 20005; or by phone at (202) 393-7141.