

CPTED STRATEGIES AT WORK

Commercial Properties:

For a community to remain healthy, its local businesses must flourish. For businesses to do well, they must be perceived as safe places to frequent. Shopping centers, convenience stores, commercial buildings, banks and ATM's, downtown areas, and restaurants all pose concerns for criminal activity. The trend for many years was to separate land uses; however, many communities are seeing a change in this philosophy and are going back to "mixed use" development and revitalization. It is essential that CPTED guidelines be followed when building or remodeling a commercial property and especially when revitalizing our downtown areas – no matter how small or large. Ideas such as keeping customers and employees in view of each other can make customers feel safe and secure. Consider these strategies:

1. Windows should not be tinted and should be free from large signs and advertisement that would block surveillance opportunities from inside and outside the store.
2. Keep the store well-lighted and maintained; pick up trash and eliminate graffiti as soon as it appears.
3. Shelving should be limited to a maximum height of 42 inches to help with visibility.
4. Consider video cameras and/or convex mirrors to allow employees to monitor blind spots and unoccupied areas.
5. Strategically place employee work stations to increase the perception of surveillance, improve customer convenience, and employee productivity.
6. Provide some type of physical security on all exterior doors; access for deliveries and customers should be limited; do not leave side/rear doors unlocked or propped open.
7. Use signs to define property entrances and deter criminal activity (eg. "No more than \$50 in register", "Monitored by Video Surveillance", etc.).
8. Form a business association or join the nearest Neighborhood Watch group.

Office Buildings:

Offices that house multiple tenants can pose a different challenge than those buildings in which only one tenant/business operation is located. Controlling access and knowing who belongs or doesn't belong in a multiple tenant office building is very hard.

Often the common areas like hallways and restrooms become "dead space" if no one takes ownership and actively monitors the flow of pedestrian traffic through these areas. As office buildings grow in size and pedestrian and vehicle traffic increases, safety becomes an extremely important issue. In order to create a safe and secure environment:

1. Install and use effective lighting on all exterior doors, common areas, and hallways; clearly define public entrances with architectural elements, lighting, landscaping, and/or signs.
2. Design windows and exterior doors so they are visible from the street or by neighboring buildings; design interior windows and doors to provide visibility into hallways by office staff or visitors in waiting areas.

3. Design stairwells to be more open and place them in central locations.
4. Alarm exterior stairwell doors as emergency exits only or equip them with some type of controlled access.
5. Remove exterior door hardware from doors not intended as entrances.
6. Require employees to wear photo ID badges.
7. Place parking lots where they are visible from the building.
8. Locate picnic tables, exterior employee break/smoking areas, and other gathering areas where they are easily observable and where employees can observe other sensitive area of the site (parking, employee entrances, etc.).

Industrial Areas:

Many industrial-type businesses operate 24/7, posing a unique concern – the designs at most industrial sites focus more on the issue of work safety within the job site, rather than on safety from crime on the exterior or interior.

Industrial areas are often located in isolated areas, with poor illumination, and seldom, if any, surveillance. Add to this isolation, areas like loading docks, service entrances, blind alleys and expansive parking areas, and you have the potential for an unsafe environment. To help increase safety:

1. Illuminate and define all entrances so they are visible to the public and patrol vehicles; keep them neat and well-maintained.
2. Use a separate, well-marked, and monitored entrance for deliveries; limit deliveries to daylight hours only, if possible.
3. Design reception areas to have a view of the parking areas, especially visitor parking; limit access to only one controlled entrance into the employee work area.
4. Designate employee entrance close to employee parking and work stations.
5. Avoid dead-end driveways and street designs to increase surveillance opportunities.
6. Avoid creating hiding places in alleys, storage yards, loading docks, etc.; provide access to both the front and rear of the site so the grounds can be patrolled.