



# MERCHANTS' ROBBERY PREVENTION TIPS

## Preventing Robbery

- Keep your front doors and windows clear of signs and posters and other objects to allow good, two-way visibility. Employees can see suspicious persons outside. Passers-by and police can see inside.
- Make sure your cash register area is clearly visible to outside observers. Practice good cash control. Keep a minimum amount in your cash drawer and make regular drops into a safe.
- Establish communication with your district police station. Let them know your operating hours and contact information.
- Dedicate a "Door Monitor" to greet and observe patrons. A door monitor will be useful in spotting potential problem people and calling for help if needed.
- Keep the outside of your business well lit at night. Keep your business looking neat and clean. A clean environment is good for business but uncomfortable for robbers.
- Use video cameras and mirrors to observe all areas of a business. Use camera surveillance and make it well known. Consider installing a closed circuit surveillance camera at the entrance.
- Consider installing a "Silent/Hold-Up" alarm that is accessible in the front and rear of the business.
- Be alert for "customers" who seem to be loitering or glancing around. Watch for suspicious persons outside the business - especially in parked cars.
- If you see someone who is acting suspicious inside or outside, call the police **(415) 553-0123** to have him or her checked out.
- Two persons should be on hand at opening and closing times. At opening time, one person should enter the store and check to see if it has been disturbed. Before closing, one person should check the office, backrooms and restrooms to make sure no one is hiding inside.
- Keep side and back doors locked. Have employees use the main entrance, if possible.
- Place markers at the main entrance that employees can use to help gauge the height of a robber as he leaves.

## What To Do During A Robbery

- Try to stay calm. Do not make any sudden movements to upset the robber.
- Do exactly as you are told, **DO NOT RESIST**.
- Activate your alarm **ONLY** if you can do so safely.
- Tell the robber about anything that might surprise him, such as someone who is expected to arrive soon.
- If you have to move or reach, tell the robber what you are going to do and why.
- Try to get a good look at the robber so you can describe him later.
- Do not be a hero. It is better to lose your money than your life.
- Give the robber time to leave.
- Note his direction of travel when he leaves. Try to get a description of his vehicle **ONLY** if you can do so without exposing yourself to harm.

## **What To Do After A Robbery**

- Call the police ( **9-1-1** ) immediately, even if you have already activated the alarm.
- Close the business and lock the door(s).
- Do not discuss the details of the robbery with witnesses or fellow employees.
- Ask any witnesses to stay until police arrive. If they cannot, get their names, phone numbers and addresses.
- Do not touch anything that the robber may have touched. Block off areas where the robber was, if necessary.
- Try to recall as much as you can about the robber's appearance, speech and mannerisms. Make notes.
- Step outside the business when the police arrive so that they'll know the robber is gone and you are safe.
- Let the police answer inquiries from the news media.
- Do not discuss the amount of money taken with anyone other than police.

**EMERGENCY                    9-1-1**  
**FROM CELL PHONE        415-553-8090**  
**FOR NON-EMERGENCIES    415-553-0123**

**NON-EMERGENCY QUALITY OF LIFE SF CITY SERVICES 3-1-1**

We highly recommend organizing a Business Crime Watch program in your area. We also offer customized security audits for any business. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles are applied during site assessments.

San Francisco SAFE, Inc. (Safety Awareness for Everyone) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that works in partnership with the San Francisco Police Department. We offer a variety of crime prevention and public safety awareness services.

Contact SAFE for more information:

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