



Seasonal Crime Prevention Advice for Local Businesses

The below is a list of do's and don'ts to assist you to reduce / prevent the seasonal increase in retail associated crime such as theft and fraud.

DO

- Ensure good design and layout within your premises. Have you a good view of all areas of your store especially your expensive stock.
- Use technical aids such as CCTV and mirrors to see into blind spots. Ensure they are in good working order and you know how to use them.
- Ensure your staff are trained. Train staff to be observant and to engage customers early to make them aware they have been noticed.
- Check for counterfeit notes. If you are not happy with a note do not accept it and contact Police. Be wary when large denomination notes are used to pay for low value items.
- Secure your vulnerable areas. These areas include store rooms, warehouses, delivery areas and delivery vehicles where items may be present in bulk and easy to remove. Monitor these areas at vulnerable times.
- Watch out for distraction events. Small teams may enter with a view to engage and/or distract staff whilst others steal items.
- Shred all unwanted correspondence. This will assist in preventing identity fraud.
- Check your alarm systems. Check these on a regular basis to see that they haven't been tampered with.
- Get involved in 'Shop Watch Schemes'. These schemes are an excellent way to disseminate information quickly following suspicious incidents.

- Report all suspicious instances immediately. Write down details of incidents, descriptions of persons and registration numbers of vehicles rather than rely on memory.
- Change your routines when dealing with cash in transit. Vary times and routes.

DON'T

- Display valuable items in your windows or near letter boxes. If you do, remove them during closed hours.
- Change large denomination notes. Commonly referred to as ringing the changes you will be asked to change a large denomination note for smaller denominations or coins without purchase when attempts will be made to confuse you.
- Keep large amounts of money on your premises. This includes your home address.
- Drop your guard. Criminals come in many guises and may look quite respectable and may even have young children with them.

Remember that seasonal events like Christmas, generally mean more stock, more cash, more customers, more deliveries, more temporary staff and more opportunity to commit offences.

Please remember though, that this is one of the safest areas in the country to live and work. Crime is low, serious crime is lower still.

Prevention Works

If you require any further advice, please contact the Crime Prevention Officer: Terry Belshaw, tel (01539) 818787, or e-mail terence.belshaw@cumbria.police.uk