



RISK RESILIENT

Commercial Building
Security

Securing the premises to your commercial building starts with an understanding of the unique risks to your business. For instance, a jewellery store or firearms retailer require far more security measures than a bakery or book shop. To properly protect your business' premises, you first need to establish two key things: 1) what you need to protect, and 2) the theft exposure to your property. Once the theft exposure is measured, security gaps can be identified, and appropriate protection put in place.

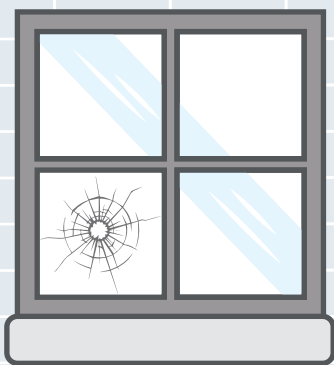
Know the Risks

Premises security is an important line of defence that shouldn't be neglected. Overlooking building security, or failing to implement the right security measures, could not only impact your property (physical and intellectual), but also the safety of your employees. When it comes to securing commercial buildings, some of the common mistakes include¹:

- Failing to enforce ID/badge requirements to control access.
- Not securing all entry points, including emergency exits.
- Not securing important rooms, such as computer server rooms and places where critical documents and files are stored.
- Installing security systems that are too complex and therefore improperly or poorly utilized.

Some risks to your business due to poor building security may include:

- Unwanted access
- Theft
- Business interruption
- Compromised employee safety
- Damage
- Vandalism/crime
- Security breach



**There were approximately
1.32 million property crimes
reported in Canada in 2019.**

Source: Statista. Published by Erin Duffin, Oct 30, 2020. Canada: number of property crimes 2000-2019. Retrieved December 16, 2020 from:
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/525290/canadanumber-of-property-crimes/#statisticContainer>

¹ Security. "6 Common Building Security Mistakes That You Must Avoid", retrieved December 7, 2020 from:
<https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/86901-common-building-security-mistakes-that-you-must-avoid>

Be Prepared

Enhancing the security of your commercial building starts by conducting a risk assessment to identify security weaknesses, uncovering potential threats including their likelihood of occurring, and addressing those vulnerabilities. To help guide your risk assessment, consider the tips outlined below. Implementing these measures can go a long way in securing your commercial building.

Risk Assessment²

Conduct a physical tour of the site:

- Keep a close eye on where and how the building can be accessed, as well as the state of the building's maintenance. Areas that aren't regularly maintained create vulnerabilities that are prone to risks and threats.
- Observe vulnerabilities of entryways, locks, camera blind spots, etc.
- Walk the premises around your building to assess ease of access.
- Review building blueprints for a 'birds eye view' of access points, blind spots, and other areas that may raise concerns.

Review any existing security reports and documentation to learn from any past security breaches or trends.

Premises Security

- Post warning signs to deter thieves, vandals, and other criminals from entering your premises. Install signs at the entrance to the yard, on the perimeter fence, and on windows and doors indicating the presence of an alarm system, video surveillance, and physical security.
- Protect valuable equipment and goods in your yard by erecting a minimum 6' high-quality chain link fence with barbed wire all around the perimeter.
- Keep the yard well lit and install security cameras to monitor, at a minimum, the main storage areas and entrances to the yard.
- Prevent thieves from using a forklift or a vehicle by removing the keys at the end of the day and storing them inside the building in a locked cabinet. Install ignition switches to further help prevent theft.

² Northern Force Security customized security solutions. September 2, 2019. "How to conduct a security assessment for your commercial building". Retrieved December 7, 2020 from: <https://nfsecurity.ca/conduct-security-assessment-commercialbuilding/>

Access Control

In most buildings, managers and maintenance staff have master keys allowing them to open any lock. The loss of one master key could jeopardize the security of the entire building.

- Consider limiting the distribution of master keys or replace them with electronic cards or personal identification keyboards. With an electronic locking system, it's easy to reprogram the locks securely in the event of a lost card.
- Require badges or key fobs at specific entrances. Limiting access to certain areas may consequently help lower potential threats.

Building Entrances

- Choose doors according to the desired degree of security, such as metal, solid wood, or doors with security glass.
- Mount doors in a solid frame, using tamper resistant hinges, and incorporate a high-quality, commercial-grade locking device.
- Ensure yard gates have padlocks made out of hardened steel with a solid fixation. During the day, either lock the padlock on the gate/fence or remove it entirely until locking up at closing time. This helps deter thieves from swapping the premise gate's original lock with one that's identical and returning later to help themselves to the business' inventory.
- Install a burglar-resistant plate on the frame, sometimes covering the closing device, to reinforce the protection of the lock.
- Install interior door latches and bars to provide additional protection.
- Choose security glass on all grade floor windows and doors to prevent smash and grab type access.
- Ensure sliding doors have a good sliding system and a floor rail to prevent them from being pushed inwards. Install an internal locking device to prevent its opening.
- Regularly maintain your doors.



Burglar-resistant plate/latch guard³

³ Cressy door and fireplace. October 28, 2020. "Security for Pedestrian Doors". Retrieved December 7, 2020 from: <https://cressydoor.com/security-for-pedestrian-doors/>

Roof Access

- Avoid roof access by placing the ladder at least 2.4 m (8 feet) above the ground or wrap a lockable panel around the bottom of the ladder.
- Equip roof hatches with an interior locking device and good locks to roof accessible doors.



Lockable ladder ⁴

Windows

It's not easy or always practical to protect glass facades, especially large ones. However, there are ways to protect the windows located on the sides or at the back of the building.

- Install security windows made of reinforced glass, plexiglass, or burglar-resistant film and protected by internal or external metal shutters or metal bars.
- Consider windows that come with glass break detectors or glass breakage security equipment devices as part of the alarm monitored security system.
- Insert screws in the middle of the top rail to prevent the windows from lifting when closed.
- Install secondary blocking devices in the rails to help prevent intrusions.

Intrusion Alarm System

The alarm system should be connected to an approved monitoring station. All alarm system components, including the monitoring station, should be approved by Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) – an independent product safety testing, certification and inspection organization – or another recognized approval organization. Approvals ensure that the installation has been carried out correctly, and that the proper components were used for the installation.

- Install a cellular link and/or a system internet link into the control panel of the alarm system to act as the communicator between your alarm system and the monitoring station. This allows the alarm signal to reach the monitoring station quickly and without disruption.
- Install digital video surveillance to quickly and easily monitor several locations on your premises simultaneously, including via a smart device. Many digital video recorders allow you to monitor your business from anywhere you have an internet connection.

⁴ BC Site Service. "Roof Access Ladders". Retrieved December 7, 2020 from: <https://www.bcsiteservice.com/product/roof-access-ladders/>

Interior Theft Protection

Rooms used for the storage of valuable goods must have solid doors, security locks, and be equipped with motion detectors and/or door contacts.

- Place excess stock in locked metal cabinets or lockable safes fitted with alarm sensors.
- Know which employees have access to each room, review your stock regularly, and keep a log of all inventory.
- Ensure regular bank deposits are being conducted as needed.

In Summary

Building security is critically important to help keep your premises and your people safe. In addition to this guidance, you may also want to consider partnering with a security contractor that can work closely with you to help you determine your needs, point out any gaps, and implement proper security measures.

Visit sovereigninsurance.ca to learn more.