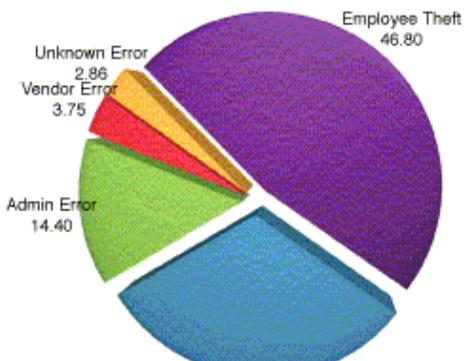


Personal Safety at Work

- Never leave a purse or wallet out where it can be stolen.
- Mark your personal property.
- Don't leave valuables at work.
- If working late, lock the doors to the business and have someone escort you to your car when you leave.
- If you are in an elevator, stand near the control panel.
- Report all suspicious activity or persons to the management.
- Be aware of all escape routes in case of fire or emergency.

Average Retail Losses



Business Watch

Business Watch is a crime prevention program developed specifically for the retail/commercial businesses of Kern County. The program is similar to the highly successful Neighborhood Watch program, which utilizes the concept of neighbors helping neighbors.

Business Watch is a program that puts businesses in partnership with other businesses and/or other community members working together to safeguard their businesses, employees, and patrons. You can get involved with Business Watch by talking to neighboring businesses and setting up a meeting with the Crime Prevention Unit.

Mission Statement

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.



Helpful Websites!

- National Crime Prevention Council - www.ncpc.org
- www.co.kern.ca.us/sheriff
- International Loss Prevention Systems - www.ilps.com

To contact the Kern County Sheriff's Office:

Emergency: **9-1-1**

Non-Emergency: **(661) 861-3110**

Non-Emergency Outlying Areas: **1-800-861-3110**

Sheriff's Report Desk (Bakersfield only): **(661) 391-7471**

TEXT: **KERNSHERIFF to 888777**

WWW.NIXLE.COM

Safe Business Practices



TIPS FOR OWNERS, MANAGERS, AND EMPLOYEES

This brochure is a publication of the
Kern County Sheriff's Office
Crime Prevention Unit
(661)391-7559
crimeprevention@kernsheriff.com

Safe Business Practices

Safe business practices are a must for a successful business. Keeping all employees educated on what to look for, what the laws and rules are, and how to react in case of a robbery or shoplifting incident is very important. The following information will help you keep your business safe for you, your employees, and patrons, alike.

Shoplifting Awareness

What to Look For:

- Customers who seem to be more interested in watching the sales clerks than looking at the merchandise
- Youth entering in groups of two or more.
- Customers who are “just looking” or appear to be loitering.
- Customers wearing bulky or unseasonable clothing .
- Customers with large purses, shopping bags, coats, etc.
- Customers carrying merchandise into the “hidden area” of the store.



What to do:

- Alert employees may be your best defense. Have them greet all customers when possible and make sure all employees are familiar with shoplifting laws.
- Announce and observe a policy to prosecute shoplifters.
- The threat of being caught, questioned by law enforcement, and being prosecuted will be a deterrent to most.
- Follow through with your policy and procedures on shoplifting – be consistent!
- Maintain strict inventory control. Limit employee access to stock and inventory. Conduct random inventory of stock and/or supplies.
- Hire a Loss Prevention Agent.

Shoplifting and the Law

Under most state shoplifting laws, a business owner or employee has the legal right to detain a suspect if they have *probable cause*. Probable cause is defined under shoplifting laws as: having direct knowledge of an offender's approach, selection, concealment, movement, and/or modification of an item, and his/her failure to pay before attempting to exit the store. When a person is caught shoplifting, they will be required to return the items, will be prohibited from returning to the store for a period of time, and may be prosecuted.

Don'ts

- Don't chase the suspect.
- Don't allow a struggle to ensue.
- Don't assume—you need actual proof of shoplifting (an employee witness, caught on camera, etc.)
- In the event of a robbery, don't open for business—you may disrupt the crime scene.
- Don't discuss details with anyone other than law enforcement.

Robbery Awareness

- Keep the front and windows clear of signs and posters. Make sure employees can see out and customers can see in.
- Keep the outside of your business well lit.
- Keep your cash register area clearly visible to outside observers.
- Keep a minimum amount of cash in the register. Make regular cash drops into a safe.
- Advertise that no large bills are accepted and limited cash is on hand.



- Use video camera surveillance and post it throughout the business
- Always have at least two clerks working at night.
- Vary your banking routine. Avoid using bank bags to carry money.
- Check back rooms such as bathroom and storage areas when closing the business.

Visibility

- Mount mirrors in corners so that there are no blind spots.
- Make sure employees have a visual on what is going on in the business.
- Keep counters low, no taller than waist high.
- Place expensive items toward the center of the business, away from the exits.
- Arrange counters and displays so customers must pass check out areas before exiting the business.
- Arrange displays so that missing items are easily noticed.
- Place small items in neat rows or clearly defined patterns.
- Reverse alternate hangers of garments, making it more difficult to discretely grab a garment off the rack

Internal Theft

Tighten your hiring practices

- Contact references and former employers.
- Contact the Labor Board for application forms.
- Develop and adhere to strict hiring standards.
- Set an example for job performance, making clear your expectations.
- Involve your employees in effective crime prevention practices.

