



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Newtown Police Department Crime Prevention Tips for Business Owners **By Captain Christopher Vanghele**

Within the last several weeks, Newtown experienced two armed robberies within as many days. Although this is an unprecedented event within our Town, commercial businesses will always remain a target for those criminals looking to steal your hard-earned money. The following tips represent the basic, bare minimum preventative measures that every business owner should follow to not only prevent thievery, but to assist law enforcement in catching the criminals after the fact.

TIP #1: Maintain a working alarm system that includes a panic button and a fire detection system. Ensure that your alarm system is registered with the Newtown Police Department and contains current contact information for the owner and any other key holders.

TIP #2: Install the best security camera system you can afford. Ensure that you have cameras that capture the face of the customers coming into the store, customers at the register, employees working the register, and several cameras on the outside of the building capturing the parking lot. Storing the information in the cloud is best, but if you store onto a hard drive, make sure that it is kept for at least 30 days. It makes it much harder to catch a criminal if we do not get a good picture of their face or of the car that they are driving. It is also of utmost importance to have adequate lighting of the building and property, leaving no part of the building dark.

TIP #3: Never keep money in the cash register. You may think that \$50 is not a lot of money, but to a drug addict it is enough of a reason to cut the power to the store, break the front door in, and steal the entire register. You now have to pay for the power to be restored, the door and glass to be repaired, clean up, and a new register. Keep all money in a safe that is bolted to the floor and cannot easily be removed due to its weight. If your business takes in large amounts of cash during the day, schedule a bank run in the afternoon to ensure that large amounts of cash are not stored in the safe overnight.

TIP #4: Train all employees on how to identify counterfeit bills. We have had a few cases over the last several months where counterfeit bills were accepted by employees. The following website is an excellent resource for learning about United States currency security features: <https://www.uscurrency.gov/>

The Newtown Police Department believes very strongly in the importance of maintaining collaborative relationships within our business community. The preceding tips are part of this ongoing initiative and we look forward to building new relationships. Please reach out to Captain Chris Vanghele at christopher.vanghele@newtown-ct.gov if you have any questions or if you would like to schedule a safety and security assessment from our crime prevention officers.