

VENTURA POLICE CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

Robbery Prevention Tips for Convenience Store Owners/Employees

Persons, who own, operate or are employed by convenience store type businesses, may be susceptible to persons committing robberies. Please use caution and review the following tips:

- Be alert for suspicious people loitering around the areas of your store/place of business.
- Be alert to vehicles in your lots, or near or around your business for extended periods, with occupants inside.
- Write down the description of the vehicle, the license number as well as a description of the occupant/s of the vehicle.
- All excess cash not needed to conduct normal operations should be “dropped” in a safe. Preferably a time lock type safe accessible only by specifically authorized persons. This fact should be prominently displayed.
- Vary routines when removing money from the business. Do not use a money bag, carry cash in non-descript packaging. Do not transport cash at the same time every day; do not carry cash, in large amounts or a long a distance to your vehicle. If practical make drops in pairs.
- Have two (2) employees working together, open and close the business in pairs.
- Business windows should be kept clear of items blocking view into the store, especially near/around the cash register. Police should be able to see into the store from the street.
- Have adequate lighting operational both inside and outside of the business, on all sides.
- Always have cameras recording both inside and outside. Ensure cameras are placed in such a way as to capture various images of persons in the store. Ensure employees can download, but not turn off, alter or erase video images. Know how to retrieve the video footage and have it easily accessible for the police.
- Limit public access to one entrance/exit. Keep emergency exits secure. Do not allow patrons into unobserved areas of the business (private restroom, break area etc.)
- Keep a cell phone at all times and do not hesitate to call 911 in the event you feel threatened or something is suspicious.
- Be careful about mentioning how good business has been, how busy you are or how much money is made.

If you are the victim of a robbery, remember these tips:

- Try to remain calm and follow the instructions of the suspect.
- Assume that they are armed even if a weapon is not displayed.
- This will be traumatic but focus on remembering a good description of the suspect/s, the vehicle and direction of travel as they leave. Also, the weapon and anything that was said.
- As soon as possible (when it is safe) make sure that the first call you make is to 911.
- Protect any evidence which may be left behind, such as anything that the suspect/s may have touched. If anyone witnesses the incident, ask them to stay until police arrive or get contact information so that they can be reached later.

As with personal safety in general, HAVE A PLAN as how you will react to specific situations so that if a crime occurs, you will not be caught completely off guard.

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