

# El Paso County Sheriff's Office

## BUSINESS WATCH PROGRAM:

### *THE HANDBOOK*



*Working together to protect our community!*



**Business Watch Coordinator  
(719) 520-7151**

## What This Handbook Will Cover:

- Business Watch Basics
- Employment Considerations
- Burglary Prevention
- Loitering
- Business Premise Form
- Check & Credit Card Fraud
- Robbery Prevention
- In the Event of a Robbery
- Additional Sheriff's Office Resources
- Crime Prevention Programs
- Business Watch Window Hangar

# Business Watch Basics

## WHAT IS BUSINESS WATCH?

Business Watch is a program designed to improve the relationship between the El Paso County Sheriff's Office and local businesses. The goal is to provide community businesses with educational and up-to-date information regarding shoplifting, internal theft, burglary, robbery, and other aspects of crime prevention geared specifically toward businesses in El Paso County.

## WHAT CAN BUSINESS WATCH DO?

Business Watch allows the Sheriff's Office to provide you with details about crime trends and current criminal activity through a communication network which can alert members of potential problems in a timely manner, as well as assist businesses with crime prevention strategies that can help with several aspects of making your business less attractive to would-be offenders.

***LESSEN THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
CRIMINALS.***



# Employment Considerations

## **IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF YOUR PERSONNEL:**

*Screen applicants thoroughly; hire only quality employees*

- Check references and contact previous employers
- Perform credit checks
- Use a drug screening process
- Use polygraph tests (if allowed)
- Perform background checks
- Keep employee information up to date

*Create a company culture of honesty*

- Make your expectations known to employees: inform them of your code of ethics, your security policy and clearly identify unacceptable behavior
- Require a high level of integrity from managers: employees need to see their supervisors held to the same level of integrity
- Treat employees fairly and with respect in order to increase loyalty
- Provide a supportive and safe environment for employees to report thefts or other abuses they witness

## **STAY ALERT TO INTERNAL CONCERNS:**

*Audit Control Methods*

- Create deliberate errors to ensure check / balance of daily deposits
- Conduct unannounced inspections/audits; especially on items that you have in inventory
- Change strategies; do not let employees know the methods that you use for audits; if they must know, then be sure to occasionally change your routine

# Burglary Prevention

## ASSESS POTENTIAL SECURITY RISKS

Pretend you are a burglar: stand outside, look at your business and try to imagine how you would get in. Then go inside and imagine what you would try to steal and how you would accomplish it. Every potential issue that you think of needs to be corrected.

## BE PREPARED & AWARE

Teach employees to be very observant of their surroundings, both inside and outside the business. Stress that they need to be consistent about using the correct safety and security procedures.

Submit a Business Information sheet (pg. 8) to the Sheriff's Office so deputies can proceed more efficiently in the event that a response to your business is needed. Have your address clearly visible on the front of your business so it is easy to find.



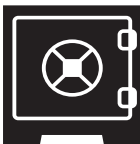
## KEY CONTROL

- Keep a record of all keys issued
- Consider having locks re-keyed
- Have employees sign keys out



## LIGHTING

- Illuminate your entire property, especially at night
- Consider using timers on lights
- Maintain interior lighting at a level that allows clear visibility into all buildings



## SAFES

- Limit the number of people who have access
- Anchor the safe firmly to the floor
- Money, checks, credit card machines should be stored in a secured location

# Burglary Prevention



## DOORS/LOCKS/HINGES

- Doors should be secured with heavy-duty dead bolts
- Attach the strike plate to the door frame with 4" screws
- The door frame MUST be as strong as the door
- All exterior doors should be constructed of steel aluminum alloy or solid-core hard wood
- All outside hinges should have non-removable hinge pins



## WINDOWS

- First floor windows should be protected with burglar-resistant glass
- Install bars, grilles, grates, or heavy-duty wire screening
- Sliding glass windows and single or double-hung sash windows should have locking pins, bolts, locks or swing latches



## ALARMS

- Understand law enforcement policy when deciding on alarm services
- Have a battery backup, fail-safe system for any alarm installed
- Consider location of alarm (e.g. holdup or silent alarm)
- Change codes after employees end employment



## TOOLS and EQUIPMENT

- Invest in engraving tools and equipment
- Machines should be secured by installing locks that secure the equipment into place
- Tools and portable equipment should be secured in drawers or cabinets at the end of each day

# Loitering

## **DO NOT ALLOW LOITERING**

Loitering is simply people hanging around your business with no legitimate reason.

## **TAKE ACTION AGAINST LOITERING**

- Loitering can discourage customers from coming into your business
- Loitering can lead to harassment
- Loitering can create a bad image for your business

## Business Premise Form

Business premise forms are used by El Paso County Sheriff's Office Deputies to ensure that your business is locked and secure while you and your employees are away.

Print **CLEARLY** and **LEGIBLY** on the other side of this page, remove, send in, and store in a safe place for your records.

### **Return completed form via mail:**

El Paso County Sheriff's Office  
Attn: Communications Center  
27 E. Vermijo Ave.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

### **Return completed form via fax:**

(719) 391-8917



To fill out this form online, visit [www.epcsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com), then e-mail to [BusinessInfo@elpasoco.com](mailto:BusinessInfo@elpasoco.com)

For more information (719) 390-5555

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suite: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Days & Hours of Operation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Company Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Hazardous materials?: Y / N

*(If YES please notify your local fire department with the details.)*

## **AFTER HOURS CONTACTS**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_



# Check and Credit Card Fraud

## CHECK CASHING PRECAUTIONS

- Only accept local checks with current names and addresses printed on them
- Do not accept checks that have alterations
- Require government-issued identification with all checks
- Do not accept post dated checks
- Do not accept two-or-more party checks

## REFUSING A CHECK

- Merchants ARE NOT obligated to take checks
- Never accept a check from a person who appears intoxicated

## CREDIT CARD PROTECTION

- Ask for identification with EVERY purchase; compare signatures
- If you are using carbons, destroy all of them
- Purchase credit card machines that provide approval numbers automatically; and do not accept credit cards if the machine is not functioning

## CREDIT CARD FRAUD (If suspicious)

- Check the validation and expiration dates
- Call the company for authorization
- Learn and USE the code to alert the credit card company of your suspicions
- Follow any and all instructions given to you by the credit card company
- Check the signature on the back of the card with the signature on the sales draft.



# Robbery Prevention

## **MAKE THE STORE ATTRACTIVE TO CUSTOMERS, NOT TO ROBBERS!**

- Keep the store neat and clean
- Keep the store well stocked
- Get away from the sales counter when there are no customers in the store
- Consider closed circuit television recording devices

## **SPOT POSSIBLE HIDING PLACES OUTSIDE THE STORE**

- Take note of possible escape routes from the store
- After dark, observe lighting and dark corners
- Keep shrubbery and trees well-trimmed and maintained

## **KEEP ALERT AT ALL TIMES**

- Notice what is happening outside of the business
- Be aware of parked cars
- Look for anyone who may be watching the business or loitering
- If you see ANY suspicious activity, **CALL THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY!**

## **GIVE A FRIENDLY GREETING TO EVERYONE WHO ENTERS THE STORE**

- Look customers in the eye
- Ask persons who are alone if they need assistance, customers like attention, robbers do not!

## **KEEP THE CASH REGISTER FUND TO A MINIMUM**

- Drop all large bills immediately, do NOT keep large amounts of cash in the register
- Make deposits regularly and change patterns so that robbers are not familiar with your routine

## **TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS AFTER DARK**

- Always be aware of your surroundings
- If at all possible, do not work alone
- Have car keys in hand, do not fumble around trying to find them

# In the Event of a Robbery



## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:



- Remain calm
- Obey the robber's orders
- Activate the alarm if you have one
- Tell the robber about potential surprises

---

## WHAT NOT TO DO:



- **Don't argue with the robber**  
*Give him/her all the cash and merchandise he/she wants*
- **Don't fight the robber**  
*The money is not worth the risk of harm to yourself or others. Trying to attack an armed robber is foolish, not heroic*
- **Don't chase or follow the robber**  
*Call 911 as soon as it is safe to do so*

# Additional Sheriff's Office Resources

## **CADET/EXPLORER PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7342**

*This program introduces young men and women, ages 14 to 21, to careers in Law Enforcement and Detentions.*

## **CITIZENS' ACADEMY:**

**719-520-7216**

*The Citizens' Academy gives citizens an inside look at the various functions of the Sheriff's Office. Participants tour the detention facilities, go on a ride-along with a deputy and learn about the responsibilities of each division from the staff who work there.*

## **SHERIFF'S CITIZEN PATROL:**

**719-520-7151**

*This program utilizes citizen volunteers to perform law enforcement-related duties that do not require sworn officers, including traffic control, parking issues, and crime prevention.*

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION:**

**719-575-8845**

*This division is responsible for supporting Wildland Fire, which includes coordinating, and insuring forest and prairie fire responses. The Sheriff's Office is also responsible for fire investigations in the unincorporated areas of El Paso County and providing search and rescue services.*

## **RESERVE DEPUTY PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7342**

*Men and women 21 years of age and older who want to work as law enforcement officers in a volunteer capacity can become Reserve Deputies. They must attend the Reserve Academy, become POST-certified, and participate in field training just like regular deputies.*

## **RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7270**

*This program allows citizens to ride with patrol deputies during normal shifts so they can observe incidents and situations that deputies respond to every day.*

## **SPEAKERS BUREAU:**

**719-520-7183**

*This is a resource for civic organizations and community groups who wish to request speakers from the Sheriff's Office to give presentations on topics of interest and free of charge.*

## **TRAFFIC UNIT MESSAGE LINE:**

**719-520-7192**

*Citizens can leave messages for the Traffic Unit about traffic issues, speeding concerns, etc. This Unit is a community-oriented problem-solving unit whose philosophy is to prevent traffic crashes through education and enforcement.*

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE:**

**719-520-7272**

*Full-time civilian employees and dedicated Victim Advocate volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to assist crime victims and their families.*

**9-1-1 EDUCATION:**

**719-390-5555**

*The Communications Center offers instruction concerning how Emergency Medical Dispatch works and the proper use of 9-1-1.*

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**719-520-7216**

*The Volunteer Coordinator can provide information on volunteer opportunities available throughout the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.*

**CRIME TIPS:**

**719-520-7777**

*This is a non-emergent tip line which is checked during business hours. Tips requiring immediate action should be given to the El Paso County Dispatch Center at 390-5555.*

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS:**

**719-520-7162**

*This unit coordinates EPSO participation at community events, strengthens relationships within the community and supports a healthy interaction between law enforcement and the community we serve.*

**NOTES:**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



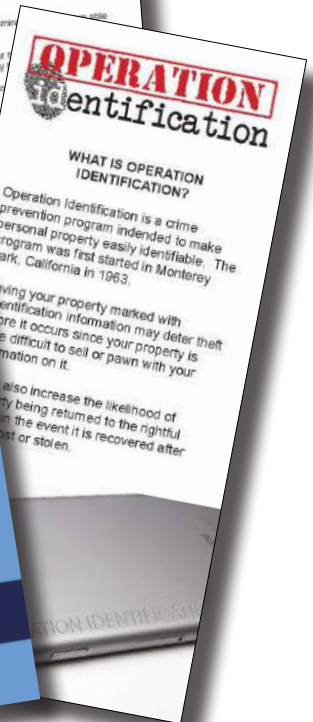
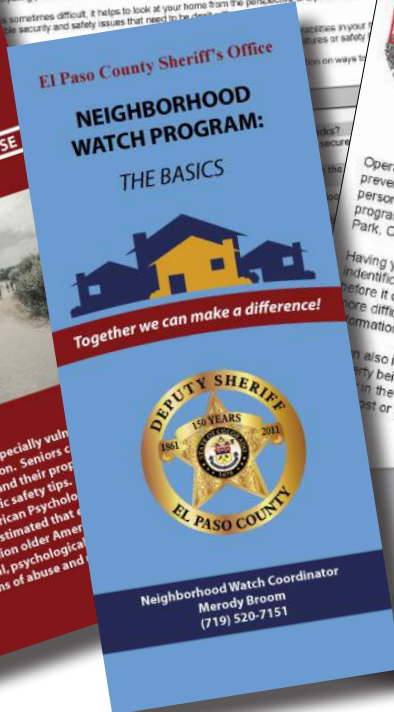
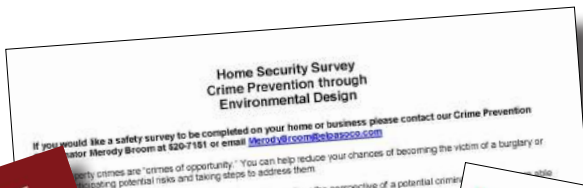
---

*For more information about these and other programs and services, visit the El Paso County Sheriff's Office website at <http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com>*

# EPSO Crime Prevention Program

The El Paso County Sheriff's Office is committed to helping our citizens keep themselves, their families and their communities safe from crime, the fear of crime and neighborhood decay. Working collaboratively with other local law enforcement officials, we help establish networking systems, provide educational materials, programs, training and safety tutorials to promote proactive crime prevention in our community.

We believe that individual citizens should be empowered to work with law enforcement to help keep themselves safe. A number of programs we offer will provide tools that you can use to learn crime prevention strategies, engage other community members, and coordinate with local law enforcement to aid in crime prevention.



# WARNING!

THIS AREA IS PROTECTED BY:



*Business Watch Program*



**EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

## Quick Reference

**El Paso County Sheriff's Office**  
*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*  
(719) 390-5555  
[www.epcsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com)

**El Paso County Sheriff's Office**  
*(Traffic Hotline)*  
(719) 520-7192

**Colorado Springs Police Department**  
*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*  
(719) 444-7000  
[www.springsgov.com](http://www.springsgov.com)

**Fountain Police Department**  
*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*  
(719) 382-8555  
[www.fountaincolorado.org](http://www.fountaincolorado.org)

**Colorado State Patrol**  
*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*  
(719) 544-2424  
[www.csp.state.co.us](http://www.csp.state.co.us)

**Colorado Department of Transportation**  
*(Road Conditions)*  
(877) 315-7623  
[www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org)

**El Paso County Department of Transportation**  
(719) 520-6460

### **El Paso County Sheriff's Office**

27 East Vermijo Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
[www.epcsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com)

