



NEIGHBOURHOOD  
Empowerment Team

# Business Safety Matters





## Business Safety Matters

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**This document is a resource for property owners, business owners and employees to help reduce crime and disorder at your place of work. This resource can help you design a safety and security plan for your business by applying one or more of the following tips. We invite you to consider the following tips which may help you address issues. Implementing some or all of them may prevent different types of crime and disorder from occurring.**



## Lighting

**Areas that are well lit help people feel safer and make your business less of a target for crime and disorder.**

### General lighting

- Use LED bulbs. They use less energy, are long lasting and are higher quality, producing bright white light
- Check all bulbs often to make sure they are working and clean from debris
- Think about where and how lights can work for your business. Different types of lights in the right location can help to illuminate problem areas.
- If you need help, consult a professional to determine which lighting is right for your business

### Outdoor

- Mount lights 9 – 18 metres from ground level
- Consider having multiple outdoor lights. Light entryways, main walkways, back alleys, parking lots and corners where people may wish to hide or gather.
- Protect lights from vandalism using a mesh or shield (which also directs the light where you need it)
- Make sure trees and shrubs are not blocking light fixtures

### Indoor

- Leave the lights on during closing hours so people can be easily seen
- Keep small rooms and storage areas well lit



**TIP** | LED lights work well with camera security systems to increase visibility.



## Visibility

**People are less likely to commit a crime if they can be seen by others.**

- If you have window blinds, keep them open during the day
- Remove blind spots or hiding places by trimming branches from the base of the trees up to 6' and keep bushes no more than 2' tall
- Keep window signs to a minimum. Ensure no more than 10 percent of your window is covered.
- Consider using shorter shelving units. Tall shelves or displays make it harder for staff to detect theft, intruders, or other criminal activity.



**TIP |** Be sure you can see all four walls of the interior from anywhere in the store. If you can't see into the corners, consider installing convex mirrors or cameras to help you see in those areas.

- Use iron or chain linked fences to help keep sightlines open. Solid fences increase the opportunity for someone to hide.



## Alarms and Video Surveillance

**Security alarm systems may deter crime and disorder, or help assist in responding to incidents. Consider video surveillance to enhance your system.**

- Change your alarm code when an employee leaves your business
- Train staff to access video surveillance to help in police investigations if management or business owners are unavailable
- Shop around for a security system, or consult with a alarm or video surveillance professional
- Clean security camera lens monthly to avoid a foggy image
- Look for an alarm company that is a member of the [Canadian Alarm Security Association \(CANASA\)](#) and are listed with the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada Certified (ULC)

- Did you know that an Alarm System Permit is required prior to installing your alarm system? Visit [edmontonpolice.ca/alarmbylawprogram](https://edmontonpolice.ca/alarmbylawprogram) for more information and to apply.
- Ensure your staff are trained in using the alarm codes and phoning the alarm company to prevent police from attending a false alarm
- If your alarm company informs you of an alarm going off when staff are still on site, ensure they cancel the call to the police to avoid a potential fine



**TIP |** Ask your insurance company if there are discounts available to installing a security system.



**TIP |** EPS recommends keeping a video recording for a minimum of 30 days.



## Beautification

**A clean and well-maintained business inside and out can deter crime and disorder and make patrons feel welcome. Watch for graffiti, garbage and broken windows.**

Learn more about how to reduce litter and prevent graffiti at: [edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup](https://edmonton.ca/capitalcitycleanup) or call 311.

- If your property has a history of graffiti, consider a [Community Mural](#)
- Use attractive landscaping and large planters to direct people to your main entrance and to discourage loitering
- If you find a discarded needle on your own property, follow the steps in the "[Safe Needle Disposal Tool Kit](#)"
- Pick up a free litter kit at participating recreation centres to assist with weekly clean up in front of your business

Check out the Business Improvement Areas or call 311 to see if your business qualifies for the:

- [Facade Improvement Program](#)
- [Development Incentive Program](#)



**TIP |** Flower planters and simple landscaping can be a lower cost option to beautify a business.



## General Maintenance

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### Watch for graffiti, garbage and broken windows.

- Repair broken windows as soon as possible
- Clean up animal or human waste: Call 311 to learn how to do this safely
- Consider limiting washroom use to customers only and know the location of the nearest public washroom. Visit [Open Data](#) to find out the public washrooms closest to your business.
- Post proper signage for parking which clearly indicates private property. See City bylaw for more information: [edmonton.ca/parkingonprivateproperty](https://edmonton.ca/parkingonprivateproperty).
- Ensure your address is clearly marked on both the front and rear of your building
- Clear snow from the sidewalks around your property as soon as possible to keep everyone moving safely. Failure to maintain your sidewalks could result in a fine to property owners. For more information visit [edmonton.ca/wintersidewalks](https://edmonton.ca/wintersidewalks).

### How to clean up graffiti or tagging

- **RECORD IT:** Take photos of the area and the time it occurred
- **REPORT IT:** Call 311 and report to the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) Online Reporting
- **REMOVE IT:** Capital City Clean Up offers up to \$750 worth of professional graffiti cleaning assistance to property owners in Edmonton once per season per property



## Lock Up Your Property

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**Securing your property can reduce the likelihood people can get into your business without your permission.**

- Ensure outward swinging doors have non-removable hinge pins. Also consider installing full length interlocking door guards.
- Solidly mount padlocks and never leave them open
- Ensure rear and side entrances are securely locked and if possible, have employees use the main entrance
- Use a sign out method for keys and collect them from employees when they leave your business
- Check that your doors and windows are secure at closing time





## Be Aware and Alert of Your Surroundings

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### Pay attention to who visits your business and the purpose of their visit.

- Train staff to report incidents as they happen and provide a detailed description of the person to the EPS non-emergency line: **780-423-4567** or Crime Stoppers: **1-800-222-8477**
- Pay attention to people who ask about your business operations, security procedures, shift changes, observe your building for prolonged periods of time, or are loitering without explanation
- Keep a close eye on people wearing hats and/or sunglasses inside, and those who bring in large bags or backpacks into your store
- Watch for people sitting in parked cars for a prolonged amount of time
- Record the license plate of suspicious vehicles if it's safe to do so
- Ensure staff are aware of emergency exit routes and safety protocol should an incident occur



**TIP** | Consider **Agent Status**. Business owners authorize the EPS members to act on behalf of the business owner as agents of the property.



## Loss Prevention

**Consider the following to help maintain your revenue and avoid unnecessary losses.**

- Display anti-theft signs
- Track inventory regularly
- Remove large bills from the cash register when counting at shift change. Ensure safe contents are deposited regularly, so the amount of cash in the safe is never too high.
- Schedule enough staff to perform duties safely and consider more staff during peak times
- Keep valuables locked or in sight of staff and away from windows
- Do not split purchases made with the tap feature of a debit or credit card and watch out for individuals wanting to make multiple purchases



**TIP** | Check out the **STOREWATCH**, a robbery prevention program designed by the EPS Robbery Section to help commercial business owners protect their employees, property and customers from a robbery.



## Back Alley Safety

**Back alleys are a common target for crime and disorder. Keeping it well lit and clean will decrease the chance of your business being a target.**

- Keep gates locked at all times and lock dumpsters when not in use
- Report burnt out city bulbs to 311 immediately
- Install motion sensor lighting behind your business. Solar powered lighting is available.
- Keep your alley clean, free of discarded trash and recycling items
- Always post your address at the back of the property. EPS can identify the location easier and citizens reporting suspicious activity know exactly where it's happening.



**TIP |** Animate your back alley by painting a mural or hanging art on your building, or by doing activities that will bring people into the alley such as parties, games or music events.

PLEASE  
HELP

## Aggressive Panhandling Around Your Business

**Ensure employees are aware of how to respond to aggressive panhandling. Reporting aggressive panhandling in progress allows the EPS to respond more efficiently.**



**TIP** | Rather than giving money to people who are panhandling, consider an indoor fundraiser – then donate the money to local organizations.

- Tell them you have no money
- Watch to make sure you're not followed
- Call EPS non emergency line **780-423-4567**
- Refer the person to 211 for an appropriate support service
- Call the 24/7 crisis diversion team at **211** to see if they can assist



## Secure Your Vehicle at Work

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**Most vehicles that are broken into are left unlocked.**



**TIP |** Consider Locking your steering wheel with a club to deter theft of your vehicle.

- Always lock your vehicle, close windows, take keys with you and never leave your car unattended while it's running
- Keep valuables out of sight, such as garage door openers, vehicle registration and electrical cords
- Use an alarm sticker to remind yourself to remove valuables from your vehicle. Stickers can be found at your local police station.
- Park in well lit areas
- Back into your parking stall when possible
- Check your license plate regularly as license plates are commonly stolen from vehicles
- Pick up anti theft screws for your license plate

# Training

**Everyone has a role to play in safety. Appropriate training can reduce the risk and hazards in the workplace.**

The [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) outlines the minimum health and safety requirements in Alberta workplaces.

Occupational Health and Safety Contact Centre in Edmonton and Surrounding area:  
**780-415-8690**

Deaf or hearing impaired in Edmonton:  
**780-427-9999**

## Canadian Mental Health Association – Edmonton Region

### Mental Health First Aid

300-10010 105 Street NW, Edmonton AB, T5J 1C4

[main@cmha-edmonton.ab.ca](mailto:main@cmha-edmonton.ab.ca)

or call **780-414-6300**

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) trains the Mental Health First Aid course instructors for host agencies like Canadian Mental Health Association

Check out [MHCC](#) for other courses offered in Edmonton.

[mhfa@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:mhfa@mentalhealthcommission.ca)

or call toll free: **1-866-989-3985**

## Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

e-Courses, v-Courses and Classroom Courses on health and safety

[cchohs.ca/products/courses](https://cchohs.ca/products/courses)

[clientservices@cchohs.ca](mailto:clientservices@cchohs.ca)

or call client services at **1-800-668-4284**

## St. John Ambulance

First Aid and CPR Courses

12304-118 Ave, Edmonton AB, T5L 5G8

**1-800-665-7114**

## Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission

Gaming, Liquor, and Cannabis related staff training

50 Corriveau Avenue, St. Albert, AB T8N 3T5

Toll Free: **1-800-272-8876**

## Edmonton Police Services

Training Includes: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Cooperative Policing, and the Citizens Police Academy

De-escalation training is also recommended

# Resources

- Connect with your [Business Improvement Area Contacts](#)
- Check with your community league for any community safety initiatives. Find your community league at [efcl.org](http://efcl.org).
- Connect with your local [Neighbourhood Empowerment Team](#).
- Connect with the [Community Crime Management Team](#) or [Beats Team](#) in your area

Downtown Division: **780-421-2200**

Northwest Division: **780-423-4567**

Northeast Division: **780-426-8100**

Southeast Division: **780-426-8200**

Southwest Division: **780-426-8300**

West Division: **780-426-8000**



