

Church Break-Ins

Due to the recent increase in church burglaries in our area, we thought it would be a good idea to share some church safety plans.

- 1) DO NOT leave money in the church; always make deposits immediately following any kind of a service or event where money is collected. IF you must leave money at the church, make sure you have a safe that is bolted to the floor.
- 2) Install motion sensitive lights-thieves generally do not like to be in the spotlight.
- 3) Turn all computer monitors OFF at the end of each day. The glow from a monitor is sure evidence that a computer is located inside that room.
- 4) If you have a security system, upgrade it to include motion sensitive cameras. If you don't have a security system, consider installing one.
- 5) If you have copper pipes, paint or tin them. This makes them useless to recycle facilities.
- 6) Cable lock your laptop to the desk. Although a cable can be broken, it makes it more difficult for a burglar to take and might deter him long enough to chase him away.
- 7) Keep outside doors locked when holding meetings. Often burglars will get in to a building while there is a meeting and will hide until everyone leaves.
- 8) Make regular back-ups of your hard drives. If your computer is stolen, at least you will have all your data to restore to another computer. Also, use a two-tiered password system or data encryption to protect sensitive information stored on your computer.
- 9) Protect the area around your air conditioners with theft deterrent cages and tamper resistant screws. Also, there are audible alarms that will sound if an attempt is made to move an outside AC unit or if they cut a line that results in the loss of refrigerant.
- 10) Keep all landscaping away from places where a burglar might attempt to break in. Do not give them a place to hide.
- 11) Look at the most valuable possessions in your church. What can you do to protect them? Is your insurance coverage high enough to replace them, if they are taken?
- 12) Look at your deductible. Would it be worth the price of your deductible to implement some safety measures?

There is no way to stop burglars from breaking in if they want to. However, if you make it difficult enough to get in; it just might make them reconsider if it is taking too long for them to gain entry. If they do get in, the harder it is for them to get to what they are looking for, again, the better the chance that they will get spooked and leave empty handed. Keep this in mind when considering how safe your church valuables are.

If you have any additional suggestions or recommendations in relation to keeping our churches safe from burglars, please contact Tammie Wisniewski at tammie@psec.org or call the conference office at 484-949-8774 X304.