

# An Garda Síochána Crime Prevention Information Sheet



## Building Site Security



With the inevitable increase in construction projects in Ireland in future years, construction employers and employees should be aware of the potential to incur substantial losses through theft and vandalism. Building sites are by nature easy targets with a ready market for all types of materials, tools and machinery. Good security measures should take into account all types of criminal behaviour, and not just theft.

One of the main obstacles to good security is apathy within the industry. Crimes have taken place where equipment and machinery have been stolen off sites in broad daylight and in view of staff. Similarly, property and materials have been stolen from sites and were either not missed or not reported to the Gardaí for days or even longer. Much of the crime that takes place within the industry could be prevented through greater vigilance and the implementation of standard security practices across the board.

### Staff



- Ensure that all staff on site are familiar with the company policy on security and crime prevention.
- Make individual members of staff responsible for the security of company property issued to them.
- If company property is lost or stolen through negligence by staff, disciplinary action could be taken.
- Encourage staff to report any suspicious activity to the site manager.
- Staff private vehicles should be parked off site, and where possible, within view of the site office.
- Adopt a policy of prosecution in the event of theft by staff as failure to do so enables staff to move elsewhere and continue to commit crime.

### Site Security

- The number of entrance gates to the site should be kept to a minimum thus affording a degree of control over persons and vehicles entering and exiting.

- Perimeter gates should be similar in height to adjoining fencing and should be fixed so that they cannot be removed.
- Gates should be secured with a substantial hardened steel chain and a good quality closed shackle padlock.
- In high risk areas the use of PSA approved security guards could be considered.

### Recommendations for compact sites / small-scale developments:

- perimeter security is recommended.
- fences or hoardings are effective and should be used whenever possible. Gaps, which facilitate surveillance but deny access, should be left in hoardings
- Portable mesh fencing panels should be used in town centres.

### Recommendations for large-scale developments:

- Erect perimeter fencing along the entire site
- Install steel compounds to secure plant machinery and materials.
- Weldmesh / Palisade fencing should be used with secure gates of similar height.
- Localised temporary security alarm systems should also be used.

### Lighting



- Good security lighting is an excellent deterrent and should be designed so that the intending intruder can be seen from outside the site. Link lights to the alarm.
- All doors should have vandal resistant, compact fluorescent courtesy lights fixed above them at the highest inaccessible points, and located so as not to create shadows. The lights may be operated by photoelectric cell .
- Higher levels of illumination are required for vulnerable areas such as office and storage compounds, car parks etc.
- Where CCTV is considered necessary, lighting should be arranged accordingly.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION ISSUES,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
your local GARDA CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER**

**or  
visit the Garda website at [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)**

## Access Control

- All visitors should be signed in at the Control Office where they should also be issued with security badge and safety equipment.
- Visitors should be escorted to their destination, where possible, and when the visit is completed all badges and equipment should be returned to the Control Office.
- There should be a cut-off time when vehicles are not allowed on site.
- A record of vehicles allowed on site should be maintained.
- Control office should be made aware of the schedule of deliveries.
- Warning notices should be displayed highlighting the fact that security measures are in place.
- In long term projects consider an electronic access control system, i.e. Prox /Swipe Cards, Fobs etc.

## Key Security

The distribution of keys should be kept to a minimum and individual employees made responsible for their safe keeping. When not required they should be locked in a purpose made Key Safe located in the Control/Security Office.



### Site Office

- The site office (s) should be located in an area near the main entrance with limited access opportunity for the intruder and should never form part of the perimeter of the compound.
- An elevated office, which affords an overall view of the site and car parks, is desirable.
- The use of closed circuit television and intruder alarms is Recommended.
- All office windows should have grilles/shutters fitted and should be locked when not in use.
- Computers and office equipment should be kept out of view where possible, and when not in use should be stored in security cabinets.
- All office equipment should be security marked.
- Telephone lines should enter the office (s) below ground level to protect the integrity of the intruder alarm system.

## Materials

- All deliveries of materials should be “checked in” by a designated staff and, if not being used immediately, should be stored inside a secure compound or building.
- If possible, arrangements should be made to have materials delivered as required thus reducing risk of theft.
- In housing developments consideration should be given to building the garages first for use as stores for certain high value/risk materials.
- Where steel containers are used as stores they should be locked with good quality closed shackle padlocks. The placing of an obstacle, i.e. heavy materials, machinery across the door of the container is also recommended.
- Materials should never be stacked adjacent to perimeter fencing. This makes it easier for the criminal to climb over and / or remove property from inside.

## Machinery and Plant

The following guidelines should be used in providing security for Machinery and Plant:



- Ideally, all such property should be parked in a well-lit area inside a secure compound when not in use.
- Ignition keys should be removed and immobilisers fitted and utilised. Security locks and or ground fixings are also available for additional security.
- It is essential that an accurate record of the engine number, chassis number/Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is maintained and should include any distinguishing or unique features which would assist in the recovery and identification of property. Take a clear photograph of the machinery or plant. There are several Property Marking and Tracking Systems which should be considered.
- When taking delivery of machinery/plant from a hire company it is important that a designated member of staff is responsible for accepting the delivery and completing the necessary documentation.



## Tools and Equipment

The theft of tools and equipment is a lucrative market in Ireland. Portable power tools are a very attractive target for criminals. Each year An Garda Síochána recover substantial amounts of tools and equipment but identifying the original source of the property and returning it to its rightful owners can be difficult.

For safekeeping of tools and equipment and to facilitate the recovery and return of stolen items :

- All sites should have a secure storage area for this property. Consider tracking devices for valuable items.
- In addition to maintaining a record of serial numbers, model numbers and any other descriptive detail, all such property should be marked or branded in order to provide a means of identification for tracing purposes.
- Some of the methods of achieving this are: Stamping, Etching, Sand Blast Marking Painting (some paints are treated with reagent which makes them unique from all other paints), DNA marking, Ultra Violet Marking and or Colour Coding.
- Take clear photos of tools and equipment.
- Trades people should mark all their own tools individually and be encouraged to lock them away.
- Tools stored overnight should be kept in steel containers and secured with close shackle pad-locks
- Under no circumstances should tools be purchased other than from a bona fide vendor.

***The advice contained in this information sheet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute. Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.***

**Report all thefts / Buy tools from approved outlets**