



SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK

FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



Company _____ Date _____

To encourage all of us to promote safety on a continuing basis, the Builders Exchange publishes a safety tip in each issue of the weekly **Bulletin**.
The superintendent/foreman of each job should use this safety tip in a short safety meeting Monday morning.
We suggest that this 5-to-10 minute meeting be just before lunch or perhaps right after the morning break.
You can then emphasize the SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK all week long.

Strategies to Protect Against Jobsite Theft

Week Ending 10/16/20

Tool and equipment theft are a constant headache for the construction and manufacturing industry. Tool loss drives high replacement and resourcing costs and slows construction, whether tools are stolen by outside criminals or employees or just lost on site. Overall, these losses across job sites hurt the bottom line and make work unpredictable.

Deterring and preventing theft demands changes to your operations that make them less attractive to crime. How you design and operate sites and facilities can make it less likely that tools "walk off." Preventive measures like tracking technologies and branding can reduce the desirability of your equipment. By encouraging a safe and secure construction site, your business can deliver on time and on budget.

How Losses Add Up

Large and small, tools are part of your inventory investment and bottom line, and a vital resource that your team depends on daily. Overall, the National Equipment Register estimates close to \$1 billion worth of tools and equipment are stolen each year.

Adding to the costs, stolen equipment can jeopardize construction timelines or leave employees out of work until replacements are sourced. Tools like survey equipment and radios may be harder to replace or custom ordered, forcing work to stop when they are lost. Vehicles and larger equipment can be hard to source, significantly slowing operations until a replacement becomes available.

Small tools in particular make for an attractive target for theft. Unbranded or unmarked hand tools and equipment can be easily resold or reused, impossible to tie back to one contractor or jobsite. Small tools losses can add up quickly and inconvenience your entire team.

How do you prevent theft at the jobsite? A combination of deterrence, security and changes to your tools and operations can make the difference.

Deterring Theft

Site strategy is an important part of deterring theft. Sprawling, unsecured sites are easy targets for thieves. Well-monitored and fenced sites with locked cribs and secure storage are not. The differences in how you plan and maintain your sites can determine your risk of theft.

Sites may have multiple companies working at once, beyond just your team. To prevent theft from other contractors, place parking offsite and require equipment to be checked out from cribs. Checklists can not only help prevent loss, but also keep inventory well managed and organized. Anyone attempting to steal onsite will have a difficult time reaching or walking off with equipment. Your own employees should also be incentivized or trained to report any suspicious activity immediately, increasing eyes on any potential crime.

Theft is not the only source of loss. Misplaced equipment still costs your team money. To reduce the amount of lost equipment, keep track of inventory as frequently as possible, require employees to sign out equipment, and have all equipment returned at the end of the day. If a tool is missing, you can identify the last employee using it and where it may have gone.

More traditional methods of preventing theft are still effective. Cameras, guards, and monitoring equipment record activity and prevent criminals from being anonymous. Keeping high-value equipment locked up overnight will also be a strong deterrent. A combination of well-tracked inventory, 24/7 security or monitoring and locked cribs and storage can make your site unattractive to criminals.

Preventing Loss

Certain approaches can help prevent loss across your facilities. The most effective tool to prevent theft is the habits and behaviors of your own employees.

How your team manages and tracks their tools, equipment and site can protect you from theft. Employees that are diligent about tracking what tools they check out of cribs and return each day help you maintain tight inventory controls. A team that locks gates, monitors for unusual activity, and holds their peers to a high standard can help to reduce the chronic amount of employee theft in the construction industry. Incentives and training can make loss reduction as important and well-understood as safety.

Even small and creative changes can make a difference. Branding and personalization can make your tools and equipment difficult to resell and immediately distinctive. Picking bright, uncommon colors for your tools may also help. If a thief cannot make a profit off your tools or does not want to be seen in public with them, they are less likely to take them.

High-value equipment can require more of an investment to prevent theft. For generators, lighting, and smaller vehicles, consider GPS technology to track the equipment. Your team will always know where it is, and in the event of theft, can report the current location. Only 23% of equipment stolen from sites is ever recovered, and location information can make the difference.

Vehicles make for a particularly compelling target for thieves. Unique or expensive construction equipment is in high demand and can be more easily hidden or repurposed. Older models may not even include more modern security technologies, creating an easy target for theft. Consider replacing or updating older equipment to enhance safety and security and invest in new technology to cut the chances of theft.

Special Topics for this Job: _____

MSDS # _____ Reviewed – Title: _____

Present at Meeting:

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Supervisor's Signature: _____

Note: These SAFETY TIPS OF THE WEEK are to help members provide a safe workplace and to instruct employees in ways to prevent accidents. Ensure you record the names of those who attend your safety meetings, and file this form with your permanent accident prevention records.