

# LOSS CONTROL TIPS

Below are some tips to make theft and vandalism on your jobsite more difficult.

**MOTION-ACTIVATED LIGHTING** This gives the impression an intrusion has been detected, discourages potential trespassers and warns neighbors of potential intruders. Contact neighbors around the jobsite to call the police if they see anything suspicious.

**ALARM SYSTEM** Loud noises scare away most trespassers (particularly teenagers) and can bring the police sooner.

**CAMERA and SIGNAGE** A dummy camera is better than nothing—and coupled with lighting, alarms and signage for prosecution of trespassers—make it clear you're serious about protecting your property.

**FENCING** Ideally, this should be done for the entire site. At a minimum, the area around trailers and material storage should be enclosed. Make sure to secure tools and equipment when not in use and keys should be logged and issued to as few people as possible.

**INVENTORY** All assets on the site should be identified, inventoried and tracked as closely as possible. Engrave construction equipment in at least two obvious areas, one hidden.

**SCHEDULING** High-dollar items such as HVAC equipment, fixtures, and expensive accessories like controls should be kept off site until the last moment. Installation should take place the same day, if possible, and the same week, at a minimum.

**LOCKDOWN ROUTINE** Assign one person solely responsible for jobsite security. This worker should confirm the following items have been completed before leaving the job site:

1. A complete tool and equipment inventory
2. A walk around the jobsite to identify potential risks
3. Equipment and vehicles are disabled or parked defensively (disconnect batteries, set blades or buckets on the ground and park in a tight group)
4. Smaller equipment has been positioned so they are difficult to steal; Use larger equipment to make the smaller machines less accessible.
5. Products are secured or partially installed.

# GUARD AGAINST INTRUDERS THWARTING THEFTS

LIGHTING, SECURITY CAN PREVENT THEFT ON JOBSITES

Jobsite theft and vandalism is a major and very costly challenge for all home builders and contractors. Experts estimate losses at roughly \$1 billion



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to \$2 billion annually in the residential sector alone. This sum doesn't account for thefts of heavy equipment, and only 10% of all stolen equipment is ever recovered. What can you do? See the loss control tips in the column to the left.

In addition to construction equipment, thieves also target materials, especially copper and other metals, according to the FBI. Installation will not necessarily prevent theft but anything that makes it more difficult and takes longer to steal your property is a deterrent.

Arson is another concern because of combustible material present on the site. New construction is an easy target for arsonists, whether they are delinquents, pyromaniacs or it's eco-terrorism. This past July, an alleged arsonist set a nearly completed new house on fire in the Maple Leaf neighborhood of Seattle. Arson consumed the construction site and also destroyed the two adjacent homes. In December, another arson caused more than \$500,000 in damage to two homes under construction in Snohomish, and fortunately, an attempt to set a third home on fire failed.

Finally, check with your insurance agent for more specific suggestions. Many instances of employing security measures can result in a decreased premium.