

# SECURITY TIPS FOR SHOPKEEPERS

## Staying Safe and Preventing Ethnic Violence

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There are many steps you can take to safeguard your employees and customers. After the events of September 11, ethnic hostility and other criminal activity may jeopardize the security of both employees and customers. Follow this advice:

- Take every threat seriously.
- If something seems wrong, it probably is.
- Follow your instincts.
- Call management to report any suspicious activity.
- Call the police if necessary.
- Watch for suspicious behavior, not suspicious people.

These are the signs of possibly suspicious behavior, if anyone:

- parks for an unusual length of time in or near the parking lot
- comes into the store, but does not make a purchase
- asks an employee's nationality
- returns to the store after having been in there earlier
- seems agitated or raises their voice
- makes inflammatory or derogatory remarks
- verbally or physically threatens employees or customers.

If a threatening note, sign, message, or recorded message is left at the location, save it, and report it to the police.

Follow these security rules:

### **Territoriality**

- Define your territory with:
  1. landscaping
  2. fences
  3. signs.
- If graffiti shows up on your building or fence, take a picture of it for the police, and have it removed immediately.
- Keep the store and parking lot neat, clean and free of litter.

### **Access Control**

- Limit the number of entrances and exits to the store and the parking lot.
- Install gates, locks, or turnstiles.
- Use guards, if necessary.



## Surveillance

- Use lighting and cameras, both inside and out.
- Remove signs from windows to provide clear lines of visibility to the cashier.
- Move displays that block visibility to the cashier from the outside.
- Make sure that security cameras are working.
- Keep tapes for longer than usual because small details that may not mean anything at the time can be critical to the police.
- Remember that people are the best form of surveillance.
- Be alert to your surroundings and report any problems.

## Suspicious Mail

Here are some of the things, adapted from the U. S. Marshall's Office and U. S. Postal Service, to look for that could indicate a bomb or biochemical agent, such as anthrax, in a package or letter:

- An unusual or unknown sender or place of origin
- No return address
- Mail that you are not expecting
- Postmark does not match return address
- Has a restricted address, such as confidential, personal, etc.
- Incorrect spelling on the name or address
- An excessive amount of postage
- Abnormal or unusual size, shape, or weight
- Uneven balance
- Oily stain on the package
- Peculiar odor (explosives may smell like shoe polish or almonds)
- White powder or other substance on the package or in the package
- Wires or strings protruding from or attached to an item

If you see one of these things, do the following:

- Do not touch or move the object.
- Do not inhale the substance.
- Contain the area immediately, such as closing a door, and moving to another area.
- Immediately wash your hands.
- Call the police, FBI, your management, and/or public health officials.

There is no guarantee of safety, but these steps have been shown to help increase security and reduce the risk of harm. For additional suggestions, you may refer to related publications and research updates listed on <http://www.AthenaResearch.com>.

You may also check the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) Resource Guide on Dealing with Ethnic Hostility and for the NACS Robbery and Violence Prevention Training Program at <http://www.cstorecentral.com/register/resource/resource/support.html>.

