

Preventing Arson & Vandalism

Crime and Violence Prevention Center • California Attorney General's Office



What can you do?

Many of the same precautions taken to discourage burglars may also discourage arsonists and vandals. By taking a few preventive steps, you can help curb these crimes.

Improve general security

- Secure all doors, windows, skylights — especially entrances on alleys.
- Install an alarm system.
- Don't allow landscaping to provide camouflage or hiding places. Keep the building windows visible and well-lighted.
- Keep your property well-lighted at night.
- Be watchful of strangers and immediately report suspicious actions near homes, schools, vacant buildings, businesses or other structures.
- Ask your neighbor to keep watch over your business while you are away.

Add fire prevention

- Install smoke alarms, automatic and tamper-proof sprinklers, and other fire safety equipment.
- Clear your premises of fuel sources such as yard trimmings, newspapers, leftover paint, old rags and other trash.
- Keep storage and other infrequently visited areas secure.
- Secure flammables in a locked fire-resistant cabinet.
- Dispose of all flammable waste materials as quickly as possible. (Check with local authorities for approved methods of disposal).
- Establish frequent and regular fire patrols.
- Maintain an efficient emergency plan program.
- Educate employees about arson prevention program.

Remember ...

It is very difficult to catch an arsonist. Cooperation between citizens and government agencies is a key weapon against arson.

- Report any information you have that would help in the investigation of arson-suspected fires.
- Protect property you own or occupy from would-be arsonists.
- Support efforts to investigate, apprehend, and prosecute arsonists.

If you have information which may help apprehend an arsonist, call your local law enforcement agency.

Vandalism prevention

Most vandalism occurs in the evenings and on weekends — so set up prevention techniques accordingly.

- Post anti-vandalism signs as a deterrent.
- Schedule custodial crews at night.
- Provide incentives for reporting vandalism.
- Keep local law enforcement agencies informed about acts of vandalism to property.
- Repair damage promptly — the sooner you repair vandalism, the less chance there will be more vandalism.

Encourage community participation

Use newspapers, radio and television to mobilize the community to be concerned and to watch for vandalism and arson.



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