

IS YOUR HOME A TARGET?

With the American standard of living, almost everyone has possessions worth stealing which a typical burglar can quickly convert to cash or use himself. No neighborhood is immune. It has nothing to do with how affluent you may be. Everyone is a potential target.

Strangely enough, the highly skilled professional burglar is probably the least of your troubles. He's after the "big score" and rarely selects his victims at random. He knows what he's after, and he tries to avoid personal confrontation. Far less predictable are the more commonly encountered law-breakers, many of them young persons living within a few miles of your home. Experience shows that housebreakers are a dangerously unstable group. In many instances, a face-to-face confrontation can mean serious consequences.

ALARM EFFECTIVENESS

In their research, Temple University professors Simon Hakim and Andrew Buck thoroughly investigated the use of alarms as a deterrent against burglaries. Their findings, substantiated by extensive data and statistics, confirmed the effectiveness of residential alarm systems. As a result of their study, objective guidance is available for the consumer to aid in the decision to purchase an alarm system.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR HOME

A perimeter system covering the doors and windows protects a family's safety better than one that limits its protection to INSIDE the premises. Perimeter protection emphasizes personal safety, while interior protection primarily protects property. From a practical standpoint, probably the greatest degree of protection is afforded by a system that combines perimeter protection with one or more interior "traps" that can be tuned off independent of the perimeter devices. Perimeter protection provides personal safety without limiting normal family activity within the home. In designing the system, care should be exercised to utilize devices that are practical in terms of freedom from accidental activation, and which blend with the family's lifestyle.

INTRUSION DETECTION DEVICES

MAGNETIC CONTACT SWITCHES: These are simple electromechanical switching mechanisms that will cause an alarm activation upon the opening of a door or window. A professional alarm company can provide an aesthetic installation. Magnetic contacts can also be creatively applied behind the frames of valuable paintings, on gun cabinets, and antiques.

MOTION DETECTORS: There are many interior devices that are commonly known as motion detectors. Physical environment affects motion detectors, so they must be applied correctly to ensure proper operation. A security professional will evaluate which detector is best for you.

"Infrared motion detectors" sense the movement of an object (individual) radiating infrared energy (body heat). Hence, they are sometimes called "body heat detectors".

"Ultrasonic" motion detectors fill an area with ultrasonic energy patterns which are observed by the unit. Any motion changes the pattern which triggers the unit.

"Photoelectric beams" are invisible light patterns usually used in hallways. An interruption of the beam activates the unit. A pulsed light pattern makes it immune to normal ambient light.

CLASS BREAK SENSORS: "Piezoelectric" glass break detectors affix to the glass and sense certain frequencies through the glass. "Audio" glass break detectors are basically microphones that "listen" for the sounds of breaking glass. "Shock" sensors detect the vibrations caused by the attack on the glass. "Dual Technology" sensors use two forms of glass break detection before activating to minimize potential false alarms. When it comes to glass break sensors, proper application is extremely important.

PANIC BUTTONS

Audible panic buttons can be located throughout the house and can be activated while the intruder is still outside, avoiding a confrontation. Panic buttons have the ability of being portable, for added convenience as well as security. If forced to disarm the system, a "duress code" can be entered on the keypad which will disarm the system, but also signal the central monitoring station to send help.

ALARM SIRENS

The purpose of the siren is to let the burglar know that he has been detected. For residential systems that contain fire detection components, the siren should emit distinctly different sounds for burglary and fire, so that the occupant can determine the nature of the emergency. Voice driven sirens can also give a verbal notification of "Burglary" or "Fire" to identify the emergency.

CONTROL PANELS

The term "control panel" is somewhat of a misnomer from the standpoint of the consumer since it is not what you use to control the security system, but rather what the security system uses to control itself. The control panel generally determines the features of the security system, including the number of zones (protection areas/points). Almost all control panels manufactured today are microprocessor based and include a rechargeable backup battery and an integral digital communications unit used to send signals to a central monitoring station.

DIGITAL KEY STATIONS

The digital key station is what you use to control your security system and they can be located at convenient locations in your home. The "touch pad" includes buttons and some form of visual annunciation advising the status of your system. There is also usually some audible annunciation used as a pre-alarm upon entry and for other control functions.