

Safely



SPEAKING

BY BRUCE BURTON

Theft prevention for your outside inventory

FOR the average person, simply driving by a farm equipment dealership provides a sense of how the industry has evolved over the years. The value of the inventory can be worth millions of dollars – and it needs to be protected from theft.

Security factors

Many factors need to be considered when reviewing your lot security. At one point, simply installing lighting on a lot was adequate to deter theft.

Today, a fence may not be sufficient. The theft attractiveness of your inventory is very important. Dealers who carry lawn and garden and other consumer products are more prone to theft than those who just carry agricultural equipment. The location of your lot is critical, too. A dealership located in a high crime area requires a higher level of protection. Each dealership will be different and it is important to know the situation in your area. Talking with the police or other businesses in your area is a good way to learn details of the crime environment and what is being done for prevention.

Alarmed buildings provide the best security for inventory, however, it's not practical for dealers to keep their entire equipment inventory inside a building. Fenced compounds are very good alternatives, especially when they are equipped with monitored alarms. Chain link is the most common type of fence because it provides a simple barrier and is cost effective for a large lot. The downside of chain link fencing is that it can be easily cut or damaged allowing thieves to enter without being detected. When fencing is used, it's equally important to use high quality professional series padlocks that can't be easily cut.

Combining security measures

Using a combination of physical barriers, such as fencing or landscaping, along with technology like monitored alarms, increases the effectiveness of your security measures. Monitored alarms have improved, are cheaper, and most businesses consider them a necessary cost of doing business. Most equipment dealers have monitored alarms in their buildings but their compound (or lot) may not be alarmed. Extending the alarm system to the fenced compound will prevent thieves from cutting the fence and gaining access to the compound. With the new technology that is available, false alarms are no longer an issue and the price is very affordable.

To enhance your security you may need to speak with a burglar alarm company to find out what is the best application for your situation. Options could include:

- Fence-mounted sensors that detect when someone or something cuts or climbs a fence.
- Volumetric sensors, which use a buried cable to generate an invisible detection field that detects intruders moving through that field.



- Security cameras, which are highly effective when they are monitored. Fenced compounds can be monitored with motion sensors linked to live video monitoring. When an intruder triggers the alarm, a signal is sent to a monitoring company that can view the lot and notify the police.
- Microwave protection systems are another way to monitor your compound. Using a transmitter and receiver located up to 600 feet apart, an invisible pattern of microwave energy is established between the transmitter and receiver. Intruders entering the pattern will trigger the alarm.
- You may also want to consider having a security service patrol your lot. For most dealers, this is not usually necessary. However, when you consider the value of your inventory, it may be a good option. Guard dogs can be effective, but can create more problems than they solve. We do not recommend them.

Now that the hectic fall season is finished, it's a good time to take a look at your dealership and see where security improvements can be made. The time and money invested will be well worth it.

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The information provided is intended to be general in nature, and may not apply in your province. The advice of independent legal or other business advisors should be obtained in developing forms and procedures for your business. The recommendations are designed to reduce the risk of loss, but should not be construed as eliminating any risk or loss.

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