

**SAFETY AND SECURITY INFORMATION:  
STEPS FOR REDUCING YOUR VULNERABILITY TO THEFT/LOSS  
AND PERSONAL INJURY**

Each year ATF receives more than 2,000 reports of thefts from FFLs involving more than 10,000 stolen firearms. FFLs are frequently targeted for theft by criminals, and stolen firearms by their very nature are destined to become crime guns. While an impenetrable and perfect security system does not exist, there are many steps that FFLs can take to significantly improve their chances of preventing firearms thefts, losses, and personal injury. The following suggested measures and information are intended to help you from becoming the victim of a crime as well as prevent criminals from obtaining firearms they may use to victimize others.

**SECURITY PROTOCOLS:**

- Keep display cases locked at all times and install shatter-proof glass when possible.
- Show only one firearm at a time to a customer. If the customer requests to handle another firearm, return the firearm they are currently handling to the display case before displaying the requested firearm for the customer. Lock the display case after each exchange.
- Disable display firearms by removing the firing pin or use/insert plastic ties so that ammunition cannot be readily loaded into the firearm.
- Do not keep your firearms in a location where you must turn your back on a customer in order to retrieve a firearm for display.
- Do not leave a customer unattended while handling a firearm.
- Keep your ammunition stored separately from the firearms and out of the reach of customers.
- Do not provide ammunition to a customer who is handling a firearm.
- Place mirrors in locations within the business that afford you increased visibility into blind spots, or that afford you with a view of customers should you have to turn your back to them to complete a transaction.
- Do not meet with customers who request after-business hours meetings.
- Strictly control your firearms security and accessibility at gun shows. Maintain a list describing each firearm taken to a gun show and verify that all firearms are accounted for through sales or inventory after the show. It is recommended that you do not take your record book to the show. Make all required entries in your record book after you return to your business.

Do not keep large sums of cash on hand and keep checks separate from the cash.

If you use a courier other than the U.S. Mail to ship firearms, inquire into what background checks the company performs on its delivery personnel and what the company's policies are concerning firearms shipments and losses.

Always utilize any security measures that you may already have in place. Ensure existing alarm systems are in good working order by testing them monthly and regularly familiarize employees with your established security protocols and system operations. It may be useful to plan for and practice the steps that each employee should, or should not take in the event of a robbery.

Do not talk to anyone other than your employees, the police, ATF, or your insurance carrier about existing security plans or measures at your store.

Keep your employees apprised of theft problems occurring in the area of your business that you are aware of as well as any suspect or theft modus operandi information that they may be vigilant for.

Secure your firearms inventory at the end of the day either by locking them in place with a hardened cable through the trigger guards or placing them in a vault. Consideration should also be

given to securing the breech of firearms with plastic tie strips or removing the firing pins.

Keep your inventory records accurate and up to date through regular inventories of your stock and secure your records in a safe location. In the event of a theft, the inventory records will be important to the law enforcement officials investigating the theft. The records will allow the officials to accurately identify the firearms stolen and return these items to you if they are recovered in the future. The records will also be useful to you in accurately reporting the theft to ATF and to any insurance carrier you may have as well as preventing the reporting of inaccurate information. In the event that an inventory of your stock discloses missing firearms, it is important to be sure that you believe the firearm was stolen before reporting it as such. If you are unsure, the firearm should be reported as missing rather than stolen.

Place the telephone numbers of your local police and fire departments, ambulance service, and ATF next to the telephone or, if available, enter them into the speed dial feature on your telephone. *(Use page 3 of this brochure to post these telephone numbers.)*

Wipe down all countertops and doors each night or morning. This creates a clean environment each day that a would-be robber or burglar's latent fingerprints can be captured on. This can assist law enforcement in apprehending the criminals.

Consider keeping bait money available for a criminal to take in the event of a theft. Bait money is cash from which you have recorded and kept a list of the denominations and serial numbers of the bills. If a theft occurs and this cash is taken, law enforcement may later be able to more effectively solve and prove the crime by linking your records to the recovery of this bait money from a suspect.

Make a written note and description of any suspicious person(s) or vehicle(s). Use the suspect description diagram appearing on page 10 of this brochure for this purpose. *(CAUTION: It is recommended that FFLs not approach, challenge, or otherwise place themselves in jeopardy with a suspicious person. If a suspicious situation is encountered, trust your instincts. FFLs should report it to the local law enforcement agency. FFLs should not pursue suspects. Remember, FFLs do not possess police powers and are liable as an individual for civil and criminal charges should they exceed their authority. The key is to OBSERVE and REPORT.)*

Post the Theft Warning Notice appearing at the end of this brochure in a window or other conspicuous location in your business to assist in theft deterrence.

#### **EMPLOYEE SCREENING:**

Institute an employee screening process. Conduct pre-employment background checks to include

contacting references and prior employers as well as conducting a criminal history check. Ask the references to name someone else for you to speak with that the job applicant did not list. Your local police department may assist you in conducting the records checks or require the applicant to bring a certified copy of a record check on them prior to employment.

#### **BUSINESS CONSTRUCTION, SURROUNDINGS, AND SECURITY SYSTEMS:**

Place a height measuring device next to all entrances/exits in your store for use to quickly gauge a robber or suspicious person's height. You can also accomplish this by simply marking the door frame with paint or a marker at intervals measured with a tape measurer.

Ensure the area surrounding your store has good lighting at night.

Keep any front windows unobstructed so that you can see suspicious individuals or vehicles located outside the store, individuals approaching the store, and so passers by can see in your store and detect any robberies that may be occurring.

Keep large shrubs and vines around your business low to the ground to reduce places for criminals to conceal themselves and to prevent criminals from climbing to potential points of entry.