

# RiskReporter

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for Camps and Conference Centers

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## Perimeter security

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PROTECTING  
THE GREATER  
GOOD™

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# Security measures

## for camps and conference centers cannot be ignored

### Did You Know?

#### PROPERTY PROTECTION RESOURCES

Areas for a perpetrator to hide and not be seen for the time required to breach the perimeter create a conducive environment for crime. If installed and monitored effectively, intrusion detection or motion detection devices alert security if someone is trying to breach the perimeter.

The vast majority of camps and conference centers in this country are safe places to work, learn and play. Campers and conference attendees typically end their stays with fond memories and a yearning to visit again.

But times have changed and, as we have seen all too often, violent acts and random vandalism can happen anywhere — camps and conference centers are no exceptions.

That's why, when it comes to protection, many camp directors and conference center managers are being more proactive. They are developing safety plans and adding updated security equipment in and around their buildings and grounds.

This Risk Reporter will explain how you can increase security at your camp or conference center. Put these tips to work today and protect your people, your property and yourself from random vandalism or violence.

## 5

## OUTDOOR SECURITY 101:

## upgrades camps and conference centers should consider

Camps and conference centers provide a common ground for meeting, socializing and relaxing. You want to keep it that way.

Here are five simple, but important, upgrades you can make to help ensure the safety of those who work, visit or volunteer at your facility.

**1. Consider your foliage.** Foliage and bushes are prevalent at camps. Look for areas that might allow people to hide and clear all foliage.

**2. Lock as many doors as possible.** With so many cabins and lodges at a camp, it's difficult to lock all doors 24/7. Be sure to keep the main gate locked or guarded. No one should enter or leave camp without the knowledge of a counselor or camp director.

Likewise, you also need to restrict access at conference centers. You'll want to unlock the main doors during normal business hours. After that, be sure your doors and windows are closed and locked.

**3. Keep track of keys.** It's not unusual for camps to have duplicate copies of keys for doors. Be sure you know who has those keys at any given time. (Avoid keeping valuables in cabins or rooms that do not have locks on doors and don't let campers bring valuables to camp.)

*Now is the time to budget for proper security measures at camp. Start with a proper security audit and assessment of the facility. Spending a little bit of money on a proper audit — one that reviews both operations as well as hardware — will help identify some key items that should be addressed before the summer begins.*

— Joshua Gleis  
President, Gleis Security Consulting, [www.gleisconsulting.com](http://www.gleisconsulting.com)

Conference centers regularly hand out multiple keys too. Try to limit distribution to just a few people and keep a record of who in your organization has a key. Also, never hide a key outside and rekey your locks if a key is lost or not returned.

**4. Turn on the lights.** At night, keep at least one

interior light on in the main building(s) at your camp. It gives the impression that the buildings are occupied.

Conference centers should keep hallways and entryways lit at night. This also helps give the appearance of activity in the building.

In addition, outdoor lighting is an inexpensive way to add security around your facilities. Ample lighting in the right places makes intruders less likely to see your buildings or grounds as easy targets. Parking lot and street entrances into the parking lot also should be well lit.

**5. Invite the community to get involved.** If your camp is large enough, establish a communal alert system with the other lodges or cabins around your grounds.

At conference centers, consider starting a Neighborhood Watch program. People are always willing to look out for one another because they want their community to be safe as much as you do. Ask your local police or sheriff's department about how to get started.

Did You  
Know?

## PROPERTY PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

For assistance with outdoor security planning, call our Risk Control Consulting and Research Center at (800) 554-2642, ext. 5213, or email [riskconsulting@churchmutual.com](mailto:riskconsulting@churchmutual.com).





# Ramp up protection with security teams

Creating a security team can go a long way toward ensuring the safety of your employees, attendees, visitors, volunteers, counselors and campers.

*“Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of your organization is a critical first start to good security. Whether it’s an office, church building, school, camp or other related facility — having a solid security assessment is essential.”*

— Tim Miller  
President of LionHeart  
International Services,  
security consulting and  
training company,  
[www.lhsg.com](http://www.lhsg.com)

**Here are a few tips for creating your security team, putting a plan of action in place and setting standards for its operations:**

1. Put staff members on your security team. For camps, this could be counselors, team leaders, even camp directors. Conference centers can include employees, managers or administrative personnel.
2. Identify potential crisis events.
3. Establish a written security and violence response plan for your conference center or camp.
4. Train and use your staff and employees as a first line of defense against potential threats involving suspicious people, packages or vehicles.
5. Establish procedures for patrolling exterior and interior areas before, during and after group activities, meetings and special events. Assign smaller teams to patrol the grounds periodically throughout the day as well.
6. Conference center security teams should conduct a sweep of the property before securing the doors and windows at night.  
Camp leaders and counselors should make a last pass through the grounds just before “lights out” at the end of the day.
7. Conduct regular safety surveys of all buildings and grounds at your conference center. Camps can do the same by regularly inspecting entrance gates, lodges, cabins, the dining hall and play areas. Security teams should keep written records of conditions and any corrective actions taken.
8. Call police if a suspicious person is on your property and let them investigate the situation.
9. Establish a position on on-site armed protection.

# Camp and conference center security management systems are evolving

The best way to protect your facility from crime is to put a security management system in place.

Many camps and conference centers today have the typical combination of alarms, locks, gates and monitoring equipment.

But those aren't always enough. These days, you need to add proven security practices and procedures to complement your safety equipment.

You should conduct a thorough security assessment of your buildings and grounds, for example.

It's not uncommon for conference centers to ask their local police departments to perform a security vulnerability assessment of the center.

Likewise, camps can request a similar appraisal from park rangers or the sheriff's department in their area.

Either way, emergency personnel can show you where your buildings and grounds are most vulnerable. It's a good idea to take photos of those areas too, so you can address the issues later.

You can create security teams, too.

Many camp directors recognize the importance of security teams. Many times these teams include camp counselors and staff members who can quickly report any suspicious activity on or around the campground.

Often during a camp activity, a counselor will be the first to notice a problem. For that reason, camps are including them on in-house security teams.

Conference centers are assembling in-house security teams as well. These teams are generally made up of conference center employees because they are familiar with the center and can identify potential risks as they occur.

Many camps and conference centers now equip their key staff members with earpieces and two-way walkie-talkies so they can quickly report suspicious activity to a supervisor.

If possible, hire trained security professionals. Campers, employees, attendees, visitors and volunteers will all feel safer when they see a guard on duty. Having security people walking your buildings and grounds will also help deter crime.

Another security trend at campsites today is the addition of 24/7 digital surveillance cameras. Having strategically placed cameras both indoors and out can be a powerful deterrent to vandals.

## Did You Know?

### PROPERTY PROTECTION TIP

Today, camps are taking a closer look at their overall security. While there are several ways to review program security, it is good to start with assessing a program's vulnerabilities. The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) has developed a systematic assessment process. Log on to [nfpa.org](http://nfpa.org).



# An ounce of prevention keeps buildings and grounds

# safe

They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That's especially true when it comes to protecting camps and conference centers.

Being unprepared now could spell bigger trouble later. To help avoid potentially dangerous and costly situations, make sure you're following these practices to help harden the perimeter around your buildings and grounds:

## 1. Upgrade your outdoor lighting

Using the right size lamps and fixtures helps create a feeling of safety for anyone working, visiting or staying at your camp or conference center. A good reference guide is the *U.S. Department of Energy's Exterior Lighting for Energy Savings, Security, and Safety*. You can view it at <http://tinyurl.com/zsrhwms>.

Also consider replacing older incandescent lights with LED bulbs. LEDs are a little more expensive, but they last longer and typically are brighter.

## 2. Install security cameras

Today's digital cameras can connect wirelessly to a recording system in your main office or directly to a security company. Install them near doorways and other high-traffic areas. Make sure your cameras are near a good light source so the images on your video are clear.

## 3. Consider audible alarms

Many times, audible alarm systems are overlooked in favor of silent alarms. The sound of an alarm, however, is exactly what you need to signal an emergency. The sound can also alert staff members to potential danger.

Many alarm systems now come with a pulsating strobe light that is visible for miles. This helps you and authorities pinpoint the exact location that needs attention.

## 4. Install deadbolts

Deadbolts provide the best possible security of any door locks. For conference centers, consider them for all of your exterior doors. You can get models that use letter

combinations, passcodes or even your fingerprint to open doors.

In camps, some doors aren't meant to be locked. But the doors of your main office, lodges, dining hall and cabins are all good candidates for deadbolts.

## 5. Consider an electronic keycard system

Many conference centers today are replacing traditional key systems with keyless, electronic cards. With a keyless system, you can:

- Manage a person's access via computer
- Identify who used specific doors (and when)
- Deactivate a keycard when someone leaves the organization

For camps, a keycard system could be an option for buildings that have 24/7 electrical service. Again, this could include the main office, dining hall, lodges or cabins.

## 6. Add safety curbs and barriers

If you think of your grounds as concentric circles, you want to be sure you have the right safety equipment in each area. In the outer circle, safety typically means controlling foot and automobile traffic.

Adding curbs or retaining walls around the perimeter of your conference center is a good way to direct the flow of traffic precisely where you want it to go. You can do the same thing at camps with wooden ties or sawn logs.

These traffic diverters and walls offer excellent security benefits. Depending on the size of your barriers, you can use them to keep people and cars away from restricted areas.

Terraces, raised plant beds, trees, planters, fencing, gatehouses and bollards also are good protective tools. Many facilities are using them to redirect traffic, provide added security and beautify grounds.

Consider using temporary barriers for special events and festivals, too.

Minimize  
the threat of  
serious crime  
at your camp  
or conference  
center.

## Perimeter Security Protection Checklist

Name of facility:

Person conducting assessment:

Date:

- ▶ **Establish a neighborhood watch program.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Conduct periodic surveys to ensure exterior security lights are working and placed to illuminate building entrances, sidewalks, steps, loading docks and parking lots.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Trim overgrown trees and shrubs next to buildings to help eliminate hiding places.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Secure local law enforcement for daily/nightly patrols of parking lots and buildings.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Ask local law enforcement to conduct a free security vulnerability assessment of buildings and grounds to determine strengths and weaknesses of current security practices.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Put an access procedure in place for buildings that require people to enter and leave through a main, monitored entrance door.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Reprogram or rekey door locks after a key has been misplaced or not returned.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Conduct security sweeps before, during and after camp or conference center events by trained staff members.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Regularly inspect efficacy of security alarms and/or video surveillance devices.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable
- ▶ **Develop a security team.**
  - Satisfactory
  - Needs Attention
  - Not Applicable

# Did You Know?

### PROPERTY PROTECTION SOLUTIONS

To ensure you are doing all you can to protect your buildings and grounds, visit Church Mutual's safety resources library at [www.churchmutual.com/98/Safety-Resources](http://www.churchmutual.com/98/Safety-Resources). You'll find checklists, videos, brochures and more.

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The Right People

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