



***Multiple Unit Properties:
Rear Lane and Yard Safety***

By creating and modifying the environment around us, and fostering a strong sense of community, property owners, building residents, and community members can help reduce the risk of criminal activity.

Multiple unit properties, such as apartments, highrises, and townhouses represent a unique challenge in terms of safety. For these dwelling types, residents, landlords and property owners must work together to eliminate the opportunity for crime to occur and increase community and building residents' feelings of safety.

The surrounding area plays an integral part in the overall security picture. By creating and modifying the environment around us, and fostering a strong sense of community, property owners, building residents, and community members can help reduce the risk of criminal activity.

In order to create "curb appeal", time and money are often invested into enhancing and securing the building façades and front yards of multiple unit dwellings. The same care and attention should be applied to the backs of buildings and lanes to increase perceptions of safety in and around the site. This brochure provides a number of strategies and guidelines to help improve safety around the rear lanes and yards of multiple unit dwellings.



SAFETY TIPS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS / OPERATORS:

1. Cohesion

- Ensure building residents are aware of who to contact with security and safety concerns.
- Regularly host or initiate resident group events or “Neighbourhood Watch” meetings.
- Work together with your tenants to establish acceptable behaviour in order to increase feelings of safety on your property.
- Encourage residents to be the “eyes and ears” of their community and to report any problems or concerns.

2. Maintenance

- Maintain property to the highest practical standards and quickly address any signs of decay and neglect. Refer to Property Maintenance and Nuisance Abatement Bylaw 8175 for more information.
- Remove or cover graffiti vandalism immediately.
- Screen or conceal dumpsters, while ensuring blind spots or hiding places are not created.
- Establish and enforce rules regarding large items such as unregistered or junked vehicles, mattresses, or couches left in dumpster areas, and inappropriate outdoor storage.
- Clean and maintain surface parking lots regularly.



Inappropriate disposal of garbage and household items gives an overall impression to users that the area is not cared for, and therefore potentially unsafe.

3. Lighting

- Ensure access to lanes, parking areas, and pedestrian walkways are appropriately lit and clearly visible.
- Use appropriate and adequate lighting to illuminate all outside doors.
- Ensure lighting is protected from vandals.

4. Signage

- Clearly identify buildings and surface parking lots.
- Ensure building numbers are visible from the front of the building and the lane.
- Ensure signage is well maintained.

5. Landscaping

- Define entrances, parking lots, and property lines with landscaping and architectural design elements.
- If hedging or bushes are used to establish a “perimeter control”, ensure that they allow clear sightlines, and always trim vegetation away from windows, doors, and walkways.
- Fencing should be see-through (i.e. wrought iron) or kept low to allow for clear visibility into vulnerable areas.

6. Storage Area Access

- Secure and lock garages, utility sheds, and bike storage areas.
- Avoid covering outdoor areas where loitering may be a problem.



A chain link fence can help deter criminal activity, and keep the property of the owner and the tenants secure.

7. Site Access

- Limit access to the building to one or two points that are well identified, easy to find, and secured.
- Block off dead-end spaces with fences or gates.

8. Entrapment Zones

- Eliminate hiding areas next to landscaping, dead-ends, empty storage areas, and abutting main pedestrian routes.
- If elimination of an entrapment zone is impossible, consider closing them off with open style fences (or gates).



An enclosed area located at the back of this apartment building represents a potential entrapment zone and the opportunity for crime or illegal activity to occur.

9. Surveillance

- In cases where design cannot mitigate risks, it may be necessary to install security cameras or employ other security measures.

SAFETY TIPS FOR BUILDING RESIDENTS:

1. Personal Safety

- Make yourself familiar with your building's security measures.
- Report security or maintenance issues (i.e. defective lights) to the landlord or property owner as soon as possible. If you feel that the security of your apartment building could be improved in some way, contact building management – remember, this is your home.
- Take notice of strangers who are hanging around entry points or loitering around the building. Call the police if you feel that the person is acting suspicious or is involved in suspicious activity.
- Approach shadowy doorways, shrubbery, or anything that someone could hide behind with extra caution.

2. Property Safety

- Use security locks for any accessible door or window.
- Ensure that you always lock your vehicle and/or bike.
- Do not leave valuables in your vehicle or on your balcony.

3. Cohesion

- Introduce yourself to your neighbours. If all occupants know each other then it is far easier to spot someone who does not belong in the hallways or on the site.
- Join or participate in resident group events or a "Neighbourhood Watch" group in your building. If your neighbourhood or building does not have one – create one!



SELF-EVALUATION SAFETY CHECKLIST

Owners and Operators

As a building owner/operator, you have a responsibility to keep your building and site as safe as possible. This checklist is a summary of the booklet and a quick reference on how to improve the safety of your site. It points out some of the most popular identifiers that criminals look for in a potential site for illegal activity. By completing this self evaluation you will be able to identify what things or activities you may need to improve in your building, and the area around it, and how to change your habits to increase the safety of your building and site. Keep in mind that this building is your residents' home and you rely on each other to improve safety within the development.

BUILDING RESIDENTS	Yes	No	Improve
Do my building residents know who to phone if they have safety concerns or need to report any problems?			
Do I facilitate an opportunity for building residents to get to know each other, and work together for a safer property?			
Do I ask building residents if they have any concerns or have experienced any problems?			

MAINTENANCE	Yes	No	Improve
Do I maintain the property to a high standard?			
Do I remove graffiti vandalism as soon as possible?			
Do I keep trees and shrubs trimmed so that they do not block doors/windows or create hiding places?			
Do I check and repair damaged lighting immediately?			

SITE ACCESS	Yes	No	Improve
Do I have clear signage that identifies entrances and private property?			
Do I have clear signage on my buildings and visitor parking areas?			
Do I have appropriate lighting at entrances, pathways and parking lots on my site?			
Do I secure equipment, sheds and bike storage areas?			

ADDITIONAL SECURITY	Yes	No	Improve
Do I have areas on site that could benefit from security cameras or other security measures?			
Do I have hidden areas, dead ends, or other places that may put my building residents in danger?			
Do I have open type fencing that makes it easy for everyone to see around the building and the site?			

Building Residents and Community Members

As a building resident, you have a responsibility to keep yourself, your belongings, and your home as safe as you can make them. By completing this self evaluation you will be able to identify what things or activities you may need to improve in your building and the area around it and how to change your habits to increase your safety.

BUILDING (personal responsibility)	Yes	No	Improve
Do I know my neighbours?			
Do I report suspicious activity to the building manager?			
Do I respect and use the building's security measures (i.e. door buzzers, mail locks, etc)?			

PERSONAL PROPERTY	Yes	No	Improve
Do I lock my car and/or my bike?			
Do I leave valuables in my car or on my balcony?			
Do I lock my balcony door when not in use?			
Do I dispose of garbage, recycled material, junked vehicles and furniture in the proper way?			

As building owners, operators and residents you have a responsibility to keep your building as safe as possible.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

Emergency 911

City of Saskatoon Police 975-8300

Fire and Protective Services 975-2520

Health and Safety Hotline 975-2828

Neighbourhood Safety - Crime Prevention Through
Environmental Design (CPTED) 975-3340

For more information about how to keep your
home, family and community safe, contact:

Neighbourhood Safety - Safe Growth & Crime Prevention
Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
City of Saskatoon, Planning and Development Branch
222 - 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 0J5
(306) 975-3340



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