

## PARAGON NEWS

APRIL 2015

## BEST PRACTICES FOR PARKING SECURITY

*Reduce liability with maintenance, lighting and surveillance.*

How robust is your parking garage or lot security? Beyond hazards like traffic accidents and slips and falls, occupants can be vulnerable to theft, assault, and harassment. All it takes is one incident and workers or customers may be skittish about where they leave their cars. Don't let your parking area become a minefield of menaces. You can deter criminal acts with commonsense strategies that won't break the bank.

**Understand Your Liability Risk.** If you neglect parking security, lots and garages can leave your company open to risks that can negatively affect your business reputation and insurance rates. "Parking is one of the greatest areas of liability for a property owner," stresses Sean Ahrens, a security consulting practice leader with Aon Global Risk Consulting.

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, over 2.4 million crimes occurred in parking lots or garages between 2004 and 2008. Of those, 16% were violent victimizations such as assault, rape, and robbery; the remaining 84% were motor and personal property theft. While the survey did not include murder, these numbers demonstrate the wide range of threats frequently encountered in parking areas.

Parking users are also exposed to less deadly risks such as traffic collisions, slips and falls, and medical emergencies, explains Ahrens. Individuals parking their vehicles deserve the same level of protection that they receive inside your building. This is true no matter if parking is free or paid, adds Ahrens—your company is liable for user safety either way. The challenge is that the risks for parking areas are always changing, says Geary Robinson, director of Parking and Transportation Services at the University of North Texas and co-chair of the Safety and Security Committee for the International Parking Institute. The 1990s put attention on bombings, 2001 gave way to terrorist attacks, and the last five years have seen an increase on mass shootings. No matter how big your parking area is, there's a distinct reality that it could be a gateway or staging area for violence.

It's incumbent upon a building owner and the security team to constantly evaluate their property's lot or garage and look for ways to improve safety," Robinson stresses.

Without and data to trend, however, you'll have a major blind spot when it comes to your parking shortcomings. You have to understand what conditions can produce an incident before you make changes to lighting, surveillance, or access control. If you haven't already or it's been a number of years, conduct a premise liability assessment, recommends Ahrens. This security risk analysis will document potential areas of liability that could stem from the maintenance, operation,

or design of your parking area. Some of these issues could be tied to poor upkeep, lack of security presence, inadequate personal training, failure to act and respond to incidences, or conflicts between policies and procedures.

"I can't stress this enough—you should be doing security surveys every quarter or once a year at minimum," says Robinson. "You need to confirm that everything is as secure as you think it is. Daily sweeps are even better. You need to be in the habit of identifying your safety gaps." You can also review incident reports or the calls for service, Ahrens adds. This assumes, of course, that you are keeping track of these occurrences in the first place. If you aren't, your first priority is to establish a reporting system.

Robinson, for example, receives daily copies of the UNT police reports so he can see what type of incidents have occurred in parking areas. His goal is to spot small problems and address them before they escalate.

**Don't Ignore the Broken Window Theory,** Stained concrete, rusted metal, faded parking lines, litter, and chipped paint—a dingy garage or lot appearance may lead perpetrators to think that security is just as lax as maintenance. Well-lit spaces are a major deterrent to crime because good illumination eliminates hiding spaces and increases people's awareness of their surroundings. The right lighting conveys a sense of safety and watchfulness that could make an individual with criminal intent hesitant about the risk of getting caught.

"While a formal light assessment is a plus, you can simply walk through your parking areas and see with your own eyes if illumination is poor," Ahrens notes. "Look for fixtures that are burnt out or dirty, cast a yellow light, create shadows." Take note from big box retailers, advises Robinson. Bright area lighting keeps a store's appearance inviting for customers as well as maintaining a high level of visibility for security. Schools, offices, and healthcare facilities can benefit from this same approach.

If your lot or garage still uses metal halides or sodium pressure lamps, consider switching to fluorescents or LEDs, Robinson recommends. These fixtures deliver white or blue light, which is perceived as friendlier than orange hues. They also offer better glare control and coverage. As an added benefit, you'll reap energy savings while ensuring parking spaces look inviting and approachable.

Good janitorial practices can also make a big difference in appearance, Robinson notes. Have a maintenance plan in place to address cracks in the concrete or asphalt, refresh striping, and power wash spills. Trash bins should be emptied routinely, stray litter rounded up, and graffiti immediately eliminated. Any residu-

al salt or sand from winter should be removed as well.

None of these individually presents a safety concern, but taken as a whole, this kind of clutter can indicate that there's a lack of ownership with the parking area. A clean garage or lot sends the message that property management is routinely making the rounds, which increases the likelihood that a crime could be witnessed.

**Monitor the Flow of Traffic.** A parking attendant booth, cameras, and automated barriers—each of these security features can work in concert to limit who is allowed to park on your property. Garages or lots open to the public may simply use an automatic barrier gate and ticket system, such as what is commonly used at airports. While access isn't necessarily limited, each financial transaction can create an audit trail for reference. To ensure only approved users can enter, you will need to implement a system that authorizes access based on a recognized credential. This may take the form of PIN codes, ID badges, or card readers. If you currently use magnetic or proximity cards, it may be time to update to smart cards or biometric identification. Near-field communication (NFC) devices, which use radio frequencies, are also growing in popularity as they are increasingly embedded into smartphones.

Whichever access control solution you use, make sure that it works efficiently. Wait times aren't simply an inconvenience to users, they can also create traffic jams that lead to security issues, cautions Robinson. The less time someone needs to enter or exit a parking area, the fewer opportunities there are for something to go wrong.

You should also assess surveillance capabilities. Cameras can detect an event in progress, provide recorded evidence of an incident, and demonstrate due diligence on your company's behalf. "No matter what type of surveillance you use, the most important thing is that you analyze and act on any information you've captured," Robinson says.

If you can't dedicate personnel to watch a live feed, consider analytics. This embedded software monitors images according to a set of rules. If a camera perceives activity that violates one of the rules, such as the pattern of how a person walks between cars when searching for unlocked ones, it will create an alert.

There are many applications specific to traffic management, such as wrong-way detection, license plate readers, speeding, illegal parking, and congestion. Intrusion detection, facial recognition, and suspicious activity for crowds

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or objects can be useful depending on your risk profile.

"The whole purpose of analytics is to look for irregular activity," explains Ahrens. "Alerts can prompt security personnel to prioritize the video, encourage better situational awareness feed more closely, and support the overall response to an incident."

Even motion detection, which is based on a change in pixels rather than image analysis, can improve your surveillance. Cameras can turn on only when cued by motion to conserve bandwidth usage or when movement is detected when none should be present, such as after hours.

In addition to surveillance, patrols are a smart move if you have the labor force, Ahrens adds. Whether doing a walkthrough on foot or taking a swing through in a vehicle, a human presence can curb incidents in the same way a police car cruising through the neighborhood can. It also serves as a reassurance to parking users that their safety is a priority for management.

At the very least, offer guests and employees the option to use an escort to and from a parking area, particularly in the evening hours. In the complete absence of security personnel or lot attendants, make sure to install call-for-assistance devices, Ahrens stresses. Like the blue poles installed on college campuses, these units will send a distress signal to staff or the local authorities. This ensures that occupants have an immediate way to communicate an emergency and don't have to rely on their personal cell phones. More importantly, these devices call attention to the area as having witness potential.

While you can't avoid that improving parking security will require a capital expenditure, investing in safety measures is never a waste of money. Treating your parking like an asset and securing necessary investments will result in lots and garages that remain functional and safe for all users.

## 5 Green Superfoods You Absolutely Should be Eating

There was probably a time in life when most green foods—Brussel sprouts, broccoli, spinach, to name a few—repulsed you. You definitely weren't alone. Many children are hesitant to pile green vegetables onto their plates. One possible explanation could be that green foods like Brussels sprouts, tend to be bitter, a sensation that your survival instinct tells you to avoid. Plus, children have a lot of sensitive taste buds. As you got older, you held on to fewer taste buds, slightly dulling the sense.

No matter the reason for that early aversion, we now know that green foods should be an important component of our diets. Yet only 33 percent of us meet the recommendation for fruit consumption, and fewer than 30 percent of adults eat the recommended servings of vegetables. Although the amount of fruit and vegetables you need varies a general rule of thumb is to aim for about two cups of fruit and 2.5 cups of vegetables each day. One good place to start: with these five delicious and nutrient-packed green foods.

**Avocados.** As if you needed one more reason to love avocados. This tasty fruit packs 690mg of potassium (a medium-sized banana only has 420, making it the perfect after-workout snack to help fight muscle cramps. The healthy fats found in them may help decrease inflammation and improve cholesterol levels.

**Apples.** An apple a day really might help keep the doctor away. The crisp fruit may help fight obesity, reduce your risk of stroke, and stave off certain types of cancer. Of course, not all apples are green. The good news? These health benefits apply to red and yellow ones, too.

**Kale.** Kale is (and has been) having a *moment*, but there's a reason behind this leafy green's 15 minutes of fame. For starters, kale is good for your bones, offering 24mg of calcium per cup. It's also rich in vitamin A, which keeps your skin healthy and may protect against some forms of cancer. Kale is a good source and could amp up your immune system to help your body fight off bugs. You can also get lots of vitamin K from kale, a nutrient essential for blood clotting.

**Spinach.** Even though kale may be the trendy green, classic spinach offers its share of health benefits, too. Like kale, it's filled with vitamins C and A, and it even offers slightly more fiber than kale.

**Pistachios.** Although not a fruit or a vegetable, pistachios also offer some serious health benefits. Just a quarter cup of this nut packs more than 6 grams of protein, well over 10 percent of the daily recommended amount. They also offer a healthy dose of filling fiber.



## How Identity Theft Occurs

*My wallet was stolen in December 1998. There's been no end to the problems I've faced since then. The thieves used my identity to write checks, use a debit card, open a bank account with a line of credit, open credit accounts with several stores, obtain cell phones and run up huge bills, print fraudulent checks on a personal computer bearing my name, and more. I've spent the last two years trying to repair my credit report (a very frustrating process) and have suffered the ill effects of having a marred credit history. I've recently been denied a student loan because of inaccurate information on my credit report.*

-From a consumer complaint to the FTC, February 22, 2001

Despite your best efforts to manage the flow of your personal information or to keep it to yourself, skilled identity thieves may use a variety of methods—low- and hi-tech—to gain access to your data. Here are some of the ways imposters can get your personal information and take over your identity.

### HOW IDENTITY THIEVES GET YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:

They steal wallets and purses containing your identification and credit and bank cards.

They steal your mail, including your bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers, new checks, and tax information.

They complete a "change of address form" to divert your mail to another location.

They rummage through your trash, or the trash of businesses, for personal data in a practice known as "dumpster diving."

They fraudulently obtain your credit report by posing as a landlord, employer, or someone else who may have a legitimate need for, and legal right to, the information.

They find personal information in your home.

They use personal information you share on the Internet.

They scam you, often through email, by posing as legitimate companies or government agencies you do business with.

They get your information from the workplace in a practice known as "business record theft" by: stealing files out of the offices where you're a customer, employee, patient, or student; bribing an employee who has access to your files; or "hacking" into electronic files.

### HOW IDENTITY THIEVES USE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:

They call your credit card issuer and, pretending to be you, ask to change the mailing address on your credit card account. The imposter then runs up charges on your account, because your bills are being sent to the new address, it may take some time before you realize there's a problem.

They open a new credit card account, using your name, date of birth, and SSN. When they use the credit card and don't pay the bills, the delinquent is reported on your credit report.

They establish phone or wireless service in your name.

They open a bank account in your name and write bad checks on that account.

They file for bankruptcy under your name to avoid paying debts they've incurred under your name, or to avoid eviction.

They counterfeit checks or debit cards, and drain your bank account.

They buy cars by taking out auto loans in your name.

They give your name to the police during an arrest. If they're released from police custody, but don't show up for their court date, an arrest warrant is issued in your name.

## April Fool's Day Dranks

**Bound iPhone.** Put about 100 rubber bands around your victim's cell phone in all different kinds of directions so that it covers most of the screen. Then call them.

**Donut Don'ts.** Buy some plain donuts. Then coat them in baking powder. Leave them out for your victim. They will look like powdered donuts, but taste terrible.

**Crazy Cursor.** Plug a wireless mouse into your victim's computer. Go to a nearby location and wiggle the mouse around. They will wonder why their computer is freaking out.

**Virtual Post-its.** Have you ever seen the prank where you put hundreds of post-its all over someone's office? Well, you can pull a mini version of this by putting virtual post-its all over someone's computer desktop. To create post-its in Windows 7, click Start>All Programs>Accessories>Sticky Notes.

**Pickled Head.** Print out a life-size photo of a face, or a scary creature. Find a large glass jar. Cut the photo so it fits inside the jar (facing outward with the front of the photo pressed against the glass). Then add some water (if you want, laminate the photo first, or spray with waterproofing spray). Place the jar in the refrigerator. Now...just wait until your victim opens the fridge for a snack—then be ready to shout "April Fool's!"

**Peepers Creepers.** Print out a life-sized photo of a scary face. Go outside and attach it to a window or skylight (this will work best at night). Now just wait for the frightened reaction of victim.



# April 2015

## April 2015 Events

Sun Mo Tue We Thu Fri Sat

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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- 4/1—April Fool's Day
- 4/3—Passover
- 4/4—Valley Center Food Truck Festival
- 4/4—Santee Lakes Eggstravaganza
- 4/4—Filipino Sun Festival
- 4/5—Easter
- 4/9—Opening Day (San Diego Padres)
- 4/10—VinDiego Wine and Food Festival
- 4/11—Bluegrass Day at the Flower Fields
- 4/11—San Diego Botanic Art Fest
- 4/15—Tax Day
- 4/19—Fallbrook Avocado Festival
- 4/19—Earth Fair (Balboa Park)
- 4/25—Adams Avenue Unplugged
- 4/25—Encinitas April Street Fair

## Recipes of the Month....



### Easter Brunch Ring

#### INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices of bacon
- 1/3 cup + 1 tablespoon of milk
- 4 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 can (8oz) Pillsbury crescent dinner rolls
- 1 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend
- Chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup of chunky salsa, if desired
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### DIRECTIONS

- 1) Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Line large cookie sheet with cooking parchment paper. In 10-inch skillet, cook bacon over medium heat about 4 minutes or until cooked but not crisp, turning once. Set bacon aside; drain all except 2 teaspoons bacon drippings from skillet.
- 2) In medium bowl, beat 1/3 cup of milk, the eggs, salt and pepper with a fork or whisk until well mixed. Stir in bell peppers. Pour egg mixture into skillet. As mixture heats, portions of egg will begin to set. Gently push cooked portions with a spatula to outside edge of skillet. Avoid stirring constantly. As more egg sets, push it to the edge and place it on top of the already set egg mixture. Cook 5-6 minutes or until eggs are thickened throughout but still moist.
- 3) Unroll dough; separate into 8 triangles. On parchment-lined cookie sheet, arrange triangles with shortest sides toward center, overlapping in star shape and leaving 4-inch round circle open in center. Crescent dough points may hang over edge of cookie sheet. Press overlapping dough to flatten.
- 4) Place bacon on each of the triangles. Sprinkle 1/3 cup of the cheese onto widest part of dough. Spoon eggs over cheese. Sprinkle with 1/3 cup of the cheese. Pull points of triangles over eggs and cheese, and tuck under dough to form ring. Carefully brush dough with remaining 1 tablespoon milk; sprinkle with remaining 1/3 cup cheese.
- 5) Bake 20-25 minutes or until deep golden brown. Cool 2 minutes. With broad spatula, carefully loosen ring from cookie sheet; slide onto serving platter. Garnish with cilantro and salsa.



### Cajun Deviled Egg Shrimp

#### INGREDIENTS

- 6 hard-boiled eggs
- 1/4 cup of mayo
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon chives, chopped
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne
- 12 medium/large cooked shrimp
- Chili powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### DIRECTIONS

- 1) In a small bowl, place the egg yolks and mash with a fork. Add mayo, mustard, chives, and cayenne pepper. You can also add hot sauce if you want it to have a little kick.
- 2) Using a small spoon or pastry bag fitted with a large tip, fill the egg white shells halfway with egg mixture. Place one shrimp on top of the filling with the tail standing up. Top the shrimp with another dollop of the egg yolk mixture.
- 3) Garnish with chopped chives or a sprinkle of chili powder.

## Passover Frogs



Use one pipe cleaner for the back legs which are shaped roughly like the letter V. Use a second pipe cleaner for the front legs which are shaped roughly like the letter C. Cut a tiny piece of red pipe cleaner for the tongue, and using hot glue attach the legs, eyes, and tongue to the pom-pom. Cut a circle from green felt and glue to the bottom of the pom-pom to create a nice-looking underside.



## Carrots in Dirt

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tube of refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- Yellow and red food coloring
- 1 package of Oreo cookies
- Green ribbon
- Toothpicks
- Small plastic cups

#### DIRECTIONS

Put your cookie dough into a bowl. Slowly knead in a few drops of red and yellow food coloring. Do a little bit at a time until you reach a rich, orange color. Roll about a teaspoon of dough between your palms to get a skinny cone shape. Keep them quite small because they will expand while baking. Take a knife and lightly score each carrot about 4-5 times to make some light lines. Bake them at 350 degrees F for 7-8 minutes. In a food processor place the Oreo cookies inside and ground them up into course crumbs, put a spoonful into each cup (about 1/3 full). Once the carrots come out of the oven and our cool, you can tie a bow or knot of ribbon around the end of a toothpick and CAREFULLY stab the toothpick into the top of each cookie. Place the carrot cookie in the cup of dirt and spoon a little more crumbs on each side until stands up on its own.

## Puerta Maria Bloody Mary

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1-1/2oz of Bacardi Rum
- 5oz San Juan Bloody Mix
- Fried plantains
- Chicarrones, for garnish

#### PR-Style Sofrito

- 2 large Spanish onions
- 2 med. green bell peppers
- 1 head of garlic
- 1 bunch of cilantro
- 6 ajies dulces

#### San Juan Bloody Mix

- 1 gallon of tomato juice
- 4 cups cooked Puerto-Rican style sofrito
- 1 cup of lemon juice
- 1/3 cup hot sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare sofrito by combining all ingredients in a food processor and puree till a smooth paste. Place in sauce pan and cook on low heat for 30-45 minutes; stir occasionally. Mix together the S.J. bloody mix in a large container. Combine ALL ingredients in a mixing glass, add ice and shake. Pour into glass and garnish w/plantain & chicharrones



Spring is here! 