

Choosing a Burglar Alarm

Installing an alarm can reduce a burglar's opportunity time to commit a crime. There are many alarm systems on the market, and each has advantages and disadvantages. Consult a professional to get the best alarm system for your facility.

The National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association recommends you ask the following questions:

- Does the security system monitor anything else besides fire and intruders, such as carbon monoxide or temperature?
- Does your alarm offer a radio backup unit if telephone lines are cut or unavailable?
- What happens in a power failure? Is there a battery backup system?
- How long is the contract and what's the cancellation policy?

Look for alarm systems certified by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Installation of an alarm system certified by UL, by an approved burglar alarm company, may result in a reduction in your insurance premium.

If you are located in a residential community, a local alarm (that sounds and may have strobe lights) may suit your needs. However, a central station alarm (that alerts the police or alarm company) may be more suitable for a center located in a business district.

Because access through the roof may not trigger most alarm systems, you may want to consider installing a motion-sensitive system. Any alarm system you install should protect the entire building when your center is closed.