

Preventing Burglaries

A recent study of burglary claims submitted by Markel policyholders revealed some interesting trends:

- PCs, laptops, TVs, VCRs, printers, fax machines, and cash are the items stolen most frequently.
- Burglars gained entry through rear doors and windows as well as basement windows. Thieves also tried to enter buildings through exhaust vents and air conditioning units.
- Many facilities either had no burglar alarms or had inadequate alarms, giving thieves ample time to steal multiple items. Phone lines were cut during some robberies, making alarms ineffective.

You can use the following methods to control unauthorized access:

- Increase lighting around your building. Consider installing motion-sensitive floodlights to illuminate dark areas of your property, such as under stairways, behind shrubbery, and the roof. Install these lights so they are difficult for thieves to reach and disarm. The brighter the light, the better.
- Install shatterproof glass on windows that allow easy access to your building, such as exterior door windows, windows within 40 inches of the doorknob, basement windows, and office door windows. Burglary-resistant glazing comes in many varieties, so consult a glass installation expert for a solution to fit your needs.
- Keep your premises free of debris that can be used as a tool to gain access to your building. Trim trees away from buildings so burglars can't climb them to gain access to windows or the roof. Store ladders indoors or on their sides and securely anchored when not in use.
- Install double cylinder deadbolt locks with 2-3/4 inch deadbolts on exterior doors.
- Lock doors to rooms where electronic equipment and cash are stored. Make electronic equipment difficult to steal by bolting the item's base to the floor or a desk. Etch your facility's name on equipment.