

# Appendix D–13: Environmental Control Procedures Checklist

(OSACH 2006)

## Building Security

- Install 24-hour closed-circuit video recorders for high-risk areas. If closed-circuit TVs are monitored, they can reduce crime, particularly if perpetrators know that they are being monitored.
- Alert the public that cameras are being used. Install signs: for example, “This area is monitored 24 hours per day by video surveillance cameras.”
- Place surveillance cameras and telephones to strategically complement natural surveillance.
- Restrict building access, especially at night or on weekends.
- Install alarm systems or panic buttons in areas where risk factors are present: for example, human resources units, mental health clinics, emergency or urgent care units, drug dispensing areas, patient accounts counters and psychiatric units. Systems or buttons should not be installed in obvious locations such as desks or counters. Ensure that the triggers are accessible to the employee and not to the public.
- Train, and regularly test, staff in the use of the alarm system. A trained response team should be available 24 hours per day.
- Install telephones in isolated areas.
- Secure electrical panels, communication panels and elevator controls against unauthorized access.
- Where risk is anticipated, provide staff with lightweight, easy-to-use devices such as hand-held alarms, cell phones or private-channel radios. Ensure that there is a reliable system to respond to alarms.
- Use coded cards or keys to control access to the building or within the building. Limit the number of keys and entry cards distributed. If a key or card is lost, change the entry card codes and locks immediately.
- Practise response drills monthly.

## Site Design and Environment

- Do a security audit for approaches to the building, path to the parking lot, etc.
- Assess plans for new construction or renovations to eliminate or reduce security hazards.
- Design counselling, client intake and treatment rooms with two exits if possible.
- Provide employees in high-risk areas with “safe rooms” for use during emergencies.
- Provide a separate, lockable, secure bathroom for employees with access to alarm/security.
- Provide employees with a locked, secure area to store personal belongings.
- Keep the building well-maintained and free from garbage and graffiti.
- Install clear, concise, highly visible and readable signage.
- Avoid positioning expensive equipment, such as computers, near ground-floor windows.

## Lighting

- Illuminate all publicly accessible spaces to a minimum of 4.0 foot-candles unless otherwise specified in the Ontario Building Code. Place lights to maintain consistent illumination and to minimize contrast between light and shadow.
- Use light colours for perimeter walls in interior public spaces. Such colours improve visibility and maintain light levels.
- Locate light fixtures to illuminate pedestrian routes and spaces with special emphasis placed on illuminating possible entrapment spots.
- Replace all burned-out lights immediately.

## Furniture

- Keep furniture in waiting rooms, treatment rooms and intake areas to a minimum. The furniture should be lightweight and without sharp corners or edges, or it should be secured to the floor. Avoid ornaments or pictures that could be used as weapons.
- Arrange furniture in all client areas to prevent entrapment of staff.
- Implement a retail tagging system to protect equipment.
- Organize workstations to minimize physical contact with clients.

## Entranceways and Hallways

- Design entrances and exits in a manner that discourages the public from using side or back entrances.
- Lock all unused doors, within local fire code parameters, to limit access.
- Where possible, install windows or glass doors for greater visibility.
- Eliminate hidden corners.
- Place curved or circular mirrors at hallway intersections.
- Keep windows and aisles clear to provide good sight lines.
- Replace all broken windows and locks immediately.
- Clearly define entrances and exits to public spaces.
- Incorporate clear safety-glass panels in all doors to stairwells, corridors and entrances so that users can see if another person is on the far side of the door.

## Reception Areas and Waiting Rooms

- Clearly mark reception areas and make them easy to access. The receptionist should be able to see incoming and outgoing traffic. The receptionist's area should be locked.
- Design client service desks and reception areas with deep counters to prevent clients from touching employees.
- Have a back way out of the reception area.
- Ensure that waiting rooms are comfortable. Subdued colours and non-glare lighting can reduce stress. Sound-absorbing surfaces can minimize background noise levels.
- Allow enough personal space to keep people from feeling crowded.
- Provide entertainment and distractions for people in waiting areas. Some examples are magazines, television, vending machines and toys and books for children.
- Acknowledge clients who have been waiting a long time. Provide reassurance and explanations when possible. In the event of long delays, allow people to reschedule appointments.
- Provide a separate waiting area to isolate certain individuals, as required.

## Nursing Stations

- Consider the installation of security measures. Ideally, security measures should be considered during the planning process for new construction or renovations.
- Enclose nursing stations in shatterproof glass to prevent patients from reaching in or throwing objects at nurses.
- Have a back way, or at least a second way, out of the nursing station.
- Install alarm systems that detect unlawful entry or attempts at vandalism.
- Secure medical files, medications, narcotics and medical supplies in locked storage rooms.

- Secure medical equipment and other valuable items in locked storage after hours.
- Inform patients or clients of these control measures to deter them from attempting to steal or vandalize.

## Grounds and Parking Lot Design

- Locate parking lots within direct view of the building to maximize the visual connection between the building and the parking lot. If these must be located behind a building, it is best to position them next to another public space or parking lot. Windows overlooking or doors opening onto parking lots increase visibility and, hence, safety.
- Illuminate parking areas and entrances at night.
- In enclosed parking spaces, use columns instead of solid walls for structural support.
- Clearly mark all entrances and exits of both parking and walking areas.
- Use bright, effective lighting and replace burned-out lights immediately.
- Post signs that remind users to lock their vehicles and to remember their level and aisle location.
- Use pass cards to control access to the parking lot.
- Post “No Trespassing” and “Security Patrolled” signs where applicable.
- Paint underground parking lot walls white to increase the light level, to minimize hiding areas and to maximize visibility.
- Establish a clear division between employee and visitor parking.
- Do not allow parking lot doors that open onto the street to be propped open. Doors that open onto a common area ... are preferable as they are not easily accessed by outsiders.
- Clearly mark alarms and provide zone locations at alarms so that security personnel can respond quickly.
- Link emergency doors to alarms.
- Install speed bumps in traffic lanes near exits, drive-up windows and along pedestrian routes.
- Have security staff patrol at variable times and over variable routes.
- Provide employees with a parking lot escort after hours.
- Use cameras for electronic surveillance wherever possible.
- Use strategically positioned fences to control access to the grounds.
- Locate special-purpose areas that employees must access—such as garbage disposal, annexes and equipment storage—close to the main building. The areas should be well-lit with good lines of sight from the main building.
- Avoid using canopies, shelters and awnings that block the line of sight and compromise building security. Avoid installing canopies where undesirable loitering can become a problem.
- Eliminate all unnecessary corners, planters, walls and fences that could be entrapment spots, especially near entrances and exits.
- Because shrubbery can create hiding places, keep it low and trimmed away from doors, windows and lighting. Keep vegetation close to pedestrian pathways low. Remove or trim overgrown bushes or landscaping that may block the view of the parking lot, grounds or street. Trees should be trimmed of branches to a height of 1.8 m (six feet).
- Avoid using trellises or grills against buildings; they can allow someone to climb to an upper floor.
- Install motion detectors or motion-triggered lights.
- Use polycarbonate laminate film on windows to reduce window smashing.
- Install bars over windows if necessary (and if fire regulations permit).
- Maintain a record of employee licence plate numbers so that suspicious vehicles can be identified and investigated.