



**OAKPARK
SECURITY**

10 TIPS
**TO KEEP YOUR BUSINESS
SAFE OVER CHRISTMAS**

MANAGING RISK • DELIVERING VALUE

10 TIPS TO KEEP YOUR BUSINESS SAFE OVER CHRISTMAS



Ensure that a member of staff is designated to conduct a thorough lock up of the facility

Ground floor blinds should be closed; all heaters/air-con/Christmas lights should be turned off; all hanging decorations should be removed as they unnecessarily trigger intruder alarms. Toilets and sinks should be checked prior to leaving the building. All cash should be removed from site and staff should ensure that an emergency key holder is designated to cover the Christmas period.



Check your intruder and fire systems are fully operational prior to any Christmas shutdown

Conduct tests of both systems prior to any Christmas shutdown, checking that your maintenance schedule is up to date. Having closed and alarmed your property, check with your Central Monitoring Station that they have received a 'closed' signal from the system.



Where possible, make use of timed lighting to increase deterrence

Properties that sit in darkness for days at a time present an attractive 'soft' target for intruders. Most commercial properties will have automatic timers for their lighting which can be used to help create a deterrent, while smaller office businesses can make use of timers available from most hardware retailers.



Dispose of all deposits of combustible materials prior to any shutdown

There is no reason for rubbish, cardboard, paper and other such materials to be left sitting in a business over the Christmas period. The increased packaging from cards, presents, confectionery etc during this time of year represents a primary fire hazard and should be disposed of prior to the festive holidays. Check that recycling bins (particularly paper and cardboard) have been emptied. If you have outsourced cleaners, ask them to do a check for any combustible trash within the building.



Ensure that your business is protected where possible against weather damage from ice, water, damp etc

One of the key Christmas risks often not fully appreciated is the likelihood of non-malicious and non-deliberate damage to property. Frozen pipes, water damage, flooding and the like are unfortunate consequences of the weather that normally comes with this time of year. Make sure your pipes are insulated adequately and general maintenance is up to date concerning drains, gutters, windows/doors, AND your boiler!



If you are an owner who will be leaving their business premises unoccupied over the Christmas period, ensure you have added the necessary protection

External doors should ideally have two or more locking mechanisms, usually a combination of a spring-lock and a deadbolt. If your business has a prior history of vandalism or burglary, additional measures such as reinforcing any problem doors (be sure to reinforce both door and doorframe).



Protect your data

Ensure that all shredders are emptied prior to any shutdown and that all filing is tidied away/secured as necessary. Promote a 'clean desk' policy prior to the Christmas holiday – although this should also include focus on electronic data. PC's should be fully shut down and switched off (as should all electronics on H&S grounds alone), rather than simply 'locked' or placed on 'standby'.



Utilise 'off site' storage where appropriate

Thieves are conscious that many businesses are closed over the Christmas period with staff on site or security countermeasures to protect the building. If your business holds a small amount of specialist stock, materials or even data, it is worth exploring the option of storage in a security facility over the Christmas holidays.



Planning is key!

Don't leave your Christmas arrangements to the last minute. If you are closed over the period, what are your contingency plans in the event of a break in? If you are operating on a skeleton workforce, have you ensured that you have assessed aspects such as lone working or access arrangements? Sit down with your team now and ensure a clear team briefing is issued with respect to Christmas arrangements.



Finally, beware of social media!!!!

For reasons of customer service, companies will often advertise their 'shut down' times on websites and social media platforms. This is viewed as an important mechanism relating to customer service but it also provides specific information to those who may be considering targeting your business. If possible (and we acknowledge that it isn't for some businesses), keep specific details concerning your shutdowns to a minimum.