

SECURITY

Theft and vandalism are some of the more common criminal activities that fairgrounds experience. In addition to the damage and potential liability, these activities can create a negative perception of the fairgrounds and make patrons wary of using the facilities. Agricultural societies should establish procedures to protect people and property at the fairgrounds and to discourage criminal elements. These procedures could include environmental design, increased security presence and signage.

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SECURITY



ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

The design of the fairgrounds can have an impact on crime. Opening sight lines to parking lots, playgrounds, buildings and equipment makes it more likely for illicit activity to be noticed and thus less desirable. This “natural surveillance” is also strengthened by positioning windows in public buildings toward targeted areas, along with the addition of lighting or even surveillance cameras. The idea is to create more of a visual connection between the targeted area and other people.

Agricultural societies should pay attention to eliminating areas that could hide criminal activity: shadowed alcoves, concealed spaces between structures or equipment, overgrown vegetation around buildings and the like.

Maintenance of the grounds and equipment is important to the security of the fairgrounds, as well. When equipment looks old and unused and the grounds look blighted or overgrown, it can indicate little concern for or control of the fairgrounds and imply a greater tolerance for disorder. This not only deters citizens who want to use the fairgrounds, but can also invite the wrong kind of crowd.



If fairgrounds look neglected, there is a higher probability of criminal activity.

Controlling access through natural or artificial means is another way to increase security through environmental design. The use of gates and fences provides access control and makes it more difficult to enter areas where criminals may desire to go.

Although fences keep people out of a given area, they may also keep them in. Installing a fence around a playground may be an effective way to keep children from wandering into areas that are more hazardous. Natural boundaries such as gardens, shrubs, water and rock walls can also deter access.

PRESENCE OF SECURITY AND PATROLS

Including a visual security presence can deter criminal intentions. The presence of patrols or fairgrounds employees are also a means to increase a visual security presence.

Consider working with the sheriff’s office to set up patrols within the fairgrounds. Drive-by patrols are a powerful deterrent to mischief. This is especially true in areas where illicit activity has been occurring. Increased security presence during times of higher fairgrounds usage or at special events may also be prudent.

Board members and other volunteers can also act as extra eyes and ears within the fairgrounds. In addition to staying vigilant for safety hazards, these individuals



A security shack at the entrance to the fairgrounds may be enough to make miscreants think twice about entering the fairgrounds.

can watch for signs of illegitimate activity and report it to the proper authority.

SIGNAGE

Signage serves an important role in maintaining the security of the fairgrounds. Place it where intended users can readily see it. Standardized signage, using universal pictographs, lettering and design, should be legible and easy to understand. As with other structures and equipment, periodically inspect signs and keep them in good condition.

Use signage in a number of ways:

- To make fairgrounds patrons aware of rules, regulations and conduct expectations within the fairgrounds. Post these signs at fairgrounds entrances and other activity areas.
 - To make patrons aware of hazards. When other means to mitigate safety hazards have been exhausted, install signage to warn of the danger.
- To make the public aware of other safety concerns. In areas where illicit activity may be taking place (theft from automobiles, vandalism, etc.), signage can target two groups. The first group is fairgrounds patrons. Post signs that encourage safety practices, such as “Keep your vehicles locked” or “Secure your valuables.” The second group is criminals. Signs could advertise increased security in the area.



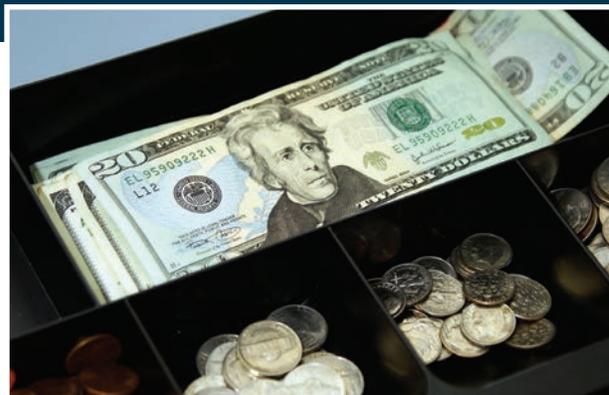
Making the public aware of the possibility of illicit activity can help prevent it.

MONEY CONTROLS

Where valuables are present, especially cash, safe handling procedures are essential. Theft risk is both internal and external. Cash collection should utilize law enforcement escort. On or off duty deputy sheriffs or police officers work well in this role.

Entrust two responsible adults with the task of counting receipts, for redundancy and to double check all totals. To make deposits, a third adult should fill this role. The amount of the deposit is determined prior to hand off, lessening the possibility of collusion and inside theft. The person reconciling the bank accounts should not make the deposits and ideally would not be one of those counting receipts, either.

Access to large amounts of cash, in particular, presents a moral hazard, effective controls work to



Utilize law enforcement during the cash collection process.

dissuade people from giving in to temptation. MCIT theft coverage does not extend to volunteers, so robust procedures, including separation of duties, are key in this area. Bank deposits should utilize law enforcement escort.

ENFORCE RULES

When agricultural societies discover people engaged in activities that are counter to the rules and regulations of the fairgrounds or ignoring posted warnings, it is

in the best interest of the organization to enforce its policies. Law enforcement can potentially increase the liability exposure of the agricultural society.