***TARGET HARDENING***

Sometimes you cannot remove a target. But you can harden the target. Target hardening involves the use of locks, electronic devices, or other hardware that will **DETECT**, **DENY**, **DELAY** or **DETER** the criminal (away from the intended target). Target hardening is directed to all structures, vehicles and personal property within the rental community.

* **DETECT:** By utilizing good security techniques, you can cause the person to make more noise, which will **increase the risk of detection**. This may also persuade the person not to commit the crime.
* **DENY:** By engraving valuables, using security electronic equipment, or by moving other valuables out of view, you can **remove the rewards received from a crime opportunity**. If the rewards are not there, this may persuade the person not to commit the crime.
* **DELAY:** Many times crimes are committed because of an easy opportunity. By using good crime prevention techniques you can **increase the time and effort** **needed to commit the crime**. This may persuade the person not to commit the crime.
* **DETER:** By utilizing the previous three techniques, you may prevent a crime from happening by **deterring the criminal from the property** to an easier target elsewhere.

***C.P.T.E.D. In Apartment Communities***

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (C.P.T.E.D.) is comprised of four (4) key elements: **Surveillance**, **Access Control**, **Territoriality**, and **Activity Support**. Virtually any property crime can be eliminated by using C.P.T.E.D.

***IMPROVE SURVEILLANCE***

SURVEILLANCE is the first element of C.P.T.E.D. **Surveillance is the ability to look into an area, and the ability to look back out.** It can be formal or informal. **Formal surveillance** is generally organized, while **informal surveillance** is naturally occurring.

**NOTE: You should observe your property from all locations, keeping in mind whether you can see into and out of the property. Keep in mind that residents and staff are formal surveillance partners, and that neighbors or visitors to your property will conduct informal surveillance of your property. Remove anything that hinders surveillance.** There are three types of surveillance to consider. *Natural, Mechanical* and *Organized*. The best plan will involve some combination of all three types of surveillance.

**Natural Surveillance** is naturally occurring. As people are moving around an area, they will be able to observe what is going on around them, provided the area is open and well-lighted. Natural Surveillance is typically free of cost, but observers may choose not to get involved in any situation that may pose a potential threat to themselves or others.

When considering surveillance of your property, remember that casual observers from neighboring properties might be willing to report suspicious activity. All you need to do is ask! It is a great idea to ask them to join your Block Watch meeting and safety socials.

***Mechanical Surveillance*** employs the use of cameras, mirrors and other equipment that allows an individual to monitor a remote area. Mechanical surveillance usually involves the purchase of moderately inexpensive mirrors to the more expensive electronic devices, such as closed circuit television (CCTV).

**NOTE: Once the equipment is purchased, maintenance of the devices must be considered.**

***Organized Surveillance*** includes security patrols and other people who are organized to watch a targeted area. While this is the most effective deterrent to crime, it is also the least cost effective. While it may be necessary to employ security patrols or off-duty police officers, once the patrols are discontinued there is generally nothing left to show for your investment.

***IMPROVE ACCESS CONTROL***

**ACCESS CONTROL** is the second element in C.P.T.E.D. Because many criminals look for an easy escape, **limiting access into an area and back out again is a great way to deter criminal activity.** Access Control can be demonstrated by having one way into and out of a location, such as a security post or the use of mechanical gates. Others, who use alternative methods to enter an area look suspicious, risk detection and sense an increased risk of apprehension.

It is important to assess how the intended users are entering the property. It is even more important to assess how the non-intended users are entering the property. Look at perimeter fencing for damage. Look for footprints in the dirt and gravel. Check for wear patterns in grassy areas. Determining the weak points will be the first step to correcting the problem.

There are three (3) types of Access Controls to considers: Natural (or *Environmental*), *Mechanical* and *Organized*.

***Natural/Environmental Access Control*** involves the use of the environment. To keep trespassers from climbing over walls for instance, you could plant thorny bushes or a hearty cactus in the area where it will be highly visible. The use of dirt berms or large rocks can also keep unwanted visitors from entering onto private property and vacant lots.

***Mechanical Access Control*** includes the use of security gates, which have proven very effective at reducing auto thefts, burglaries and drive-by shootings. Most perpetrators of these crimes do not want to exit the way they entered as it gives witnesses the opportunity to record license plates and get better suspect information.

***Organized Access Control*** entails the use of security or courtesy patrol to monitor those entering the property. Distribution of parking permits, affixed to registered vehicles, will identify which vehicles belong to the residents. **Vehicles should not be allowed to back into parking spaces, so that parking permits will be visible at all times.**

***IMPROVE TERRITORIALITY***

**TERRITORIALITY** is the third element in C.P.T.E.D. Territoriality is a psychological impression that people get when they look at the property. If management displays good territoriality, it will influence the community to respect the property as well. Good territoriality demonstrates a sense of ownership, alerting potential offenders that they don’t belong there and they will be seen and reported, because undesirable behavior will not be tolerated. **It has two (2) principle components: Defensible Space and Maintenance.**

***Defensible Space*** is divided into four (4) categories: Public, Semi-public, Semi-private, and Private.

1. ***Public*** areas are typically the least defensible. A car driving on a public street would not automatically arouse suspicion.
2. ***Semi-public*** areas might include a cul-de-sac. If there are only five homes in the circle, a driver would be expected to stop at one of the five homes or leave the area.
3. ***Semi-private*** areas might include sidewalks or common areas around residential areas. While most people may not confront a stranger in a common area, they are likely to call the police if the person does not appear to belong there.
4. ***Private*** areas are different in rental communities than in single-family home neighborhoods. In a typical apartment the private area may not begin until you actually enter into the unit. This is especially true if several units share a common balcony or stairways. In a single-family home neighborhood, many owners consider their front yard to be private, or defensible space.

There are many ways to establish defensible space. By planting low growing hedges or bushes, you will show a defined property line. By posting signs such as ”No Trespassing” or “No Soliciting”, you have established the area as defensible space.

***Maintenance*** is another key issue for Territoriality. Properties that are clean and well maintained are more likely to attract residents who take pride in their community. This also promotes confidence in the management team.

***IMPROVE ACTIVITY SUPPORT***

**ACTIVITY SUPPORT** is the fourth element in C.P.T.E.D. This involves the appropriate use of recreational facilities and common areas. The objective is to **fill the area with legitimate users so the abusers will leave.**

It may be difficult to believe that filling an area with legitimate users will cause the deviant users, or abusers, to leave. But the opposite is also true. If you fill an area with deviant users, the legitimate users will withdraw.

To promote Activity Support, utilize common areas effectively. By incorporating ramadas, picnic areas and other amenities into open areas, the legitimate users will maintain ownership of the property.

In recreational areas, utilize proper lighting techniques and establish community rules to encourage the proper and safe use of the facilities. For laundry facilities, exercise and game rooms, maintain unobscured visibility for the intended users.