



## CRIME DETERRENCE PROGRAM

*An overview of  
7-Eleven stores' program  
to provide a safe shopping  
and working environment*

More Than 30 Years of Research

Store-Personnel Training Program

Timed-Access Cash Controllers

Bright Lighting Inside and Outside

Closed-Circuit Television  
Surveillance Cameras

For more than 80 Years, 7-Eleven has been America's neighborhood food store, bringing convenience into the lives of millions. As part of its commitment to the communities it serves and its neighborhood store employees, the company has put in place one of the most comprehensive crime-deterrence programs in the convenience store industry.

7-Eleven developed and implemented its robbery and violence deterrence program in 1975-76, based on research interviews with convicted robbers. The program has been continually updated with ongoing research. 7-Eleven's crime-deterrence program is based on four primary components of visibility into and out of the stores, lighting, effective cash control, and store-personnel training. Additionally, 7-Eleven has installed video surveillance systems in its stores.

### "OPERATION ALERT" TRAINING

7-Eleven corporate-store employees and new franchisees participate in a multimedia training program and are supplied with comprehensive resource materials on crime deterrence and violence avoidance.

The program, called "Operation Alert", includes information on security procedures, proper store maintenance, violence avoidance and recommended behaviors for managing a robbery or other potentially violent encounter.

The training emphasizes the high value the company places on the safety of all 7-Eleven store personnel and customers, and 7-Eleven's no-resistance philosophy toward robbery. At 7-Eleven, the safety of store personnel and customers is more important than protecting the company's money or property during a robbery.

### THE "FISHBOWL"

Research indicates that robbers do not like stores that are brightly lit, with store staffers and cash registers clearly visible from the street. That is why 7-Eleven puts the cash register in the front of the store and keeps windows in front of the sales area free of clutter and merchandise so police and others can see in. It's called the "fishbowl" effect because store employees are on display for passersby, including police, to see. As part of a nationwide remodeling program, the company installed bright interior and exterior lighting.

### TIMED-ACCESS SAFES

Research also shows that keeping less than \$50 in the cash register deters 80 percent of potential robbers. Most robbers say the "risk" is greater than the reward for that small amount of money.

7-Eleven store employees are instructed to keep less than \$50 (\$30 at night) in the cash register. Signs notify would-be robbers that less than \$50 is kept in the cash register after dark and that tell store staffers cannot open the safe. All 7-Eleven stores use a Timed-Access Cash Controller to keep a minimum amount of money in the register yet still serve customers efficiently.

One section of the timed-access safe contains a locked drop-safe where large bills and checks are deposited by the clerk. Another section dispenses change (coins or bills) only at predetermined intervals.

## STATE-OF-THE-ART VIDEO CAMERA SYSTEMS

7-Eleven has spent millions of dollars to install and maintain state-of-the-art video camera systems and alarms in its stores nationwide. This system includes a 24-hour, closed-circuit video camera with audio capabilities and a high-resolution color monitor mounted in clear view of the customers. The alarm system includes fixed and remote-activator devices.

### FACTS

The robbery rate at 7-Eleven stores has decreased by 65 percent since 7-Eleven's robbery deterrence program was implemented in 1976.

7-Eleven is recognized in the convenience store industry and by many law enforcement agencies as the first major retailer to institute a formal crime deterrence program nationwide.

7-Eleven's Operation Alert Training Program has been certified/approved in several states.

## HISTORY OF 7-ELEVEN'S ROBBERY DETERRENCE PROGRAM

**1975** – The Western Behavioral Sciences Institute, in conjunction with 7-Eleven stores, conducted a robbery deterrence study with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. In the test stores, robbery deterrence measures recommended by robbers were implemented in order to determine their impact on crime. These steps included training employees in robbery deterrence, reducing available cash and

removing signs from store windows. The result was a 30 percent decrease in robberies in the test stores.

**1976** - A six-month follow-up study in Houston indicated the same 30 percent decrease in robberies. The message was that robbers steal for cash, and if stores reduce their cash availability and publicize it, they can deter robberies. The robbery deterrence program – including training for store personnel, cash management, additional field staff security managers, posters, signs and decals – was adopted companywide.

**1980** – A study for 7-Eleven by Athena Research Corporation (Athena) found that security cameras and alarms did not reduce the robbery rate in the experimental stores. 7-Eleven began installation of timed-access cash controller safes in its stores.

**1985** – 7-Eleven supported a survey by Athena of armed robbers in prison. The results indicated robbers still looked for the same things in stores targeted for robbery – cash availability and visibility into and out of the stores.

**1991** – One part of a three-part study by the National Associations of Convenience Stores showed robbery decreased in the first year after installation of high-resolution, closed-circuit television systems and alarms.

**1993** – 7-Eleven began nationwide installation of closed-circuit television systems and alarms in its stores as part of its nationwide remodeling program.

**1995** – Athena conducted new research of armed robbers in prison to update its 1985 study, which indicated robbers still looked for the same factors.

**1996** – 7-Eleven completed a nationwide install of closed-circuit television systems and alarms in stores. The company updated its robbery deterrence/violence avoidance training program for store personnel.

**2003** – 7-Eleven supported a survey by Athena of teenage robbers to see if the younger robbers act differently than the adult robbers. They found that they look at the target and security measures in essentially the same way, with escape route and money being the most important factors.

**2004** – The Operation Alert training program was updated including computer-based training for stores.

**2005** – 7-Eleven began installing new safes with high-speed bill acceptors and additional security accountability features.

**2007** – "Operation Alert" training, including video lighting and cash control, has been reemphasized in all of its stores.