



**Security  
Executive Council**

RISK MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

# Personal Safety and Security Playbook

Risk Mitigation Guidance for  
Individuals, Families, Organizations,  
and Communities

**COMPLIMENTARY SAMPLE  
FOR SEC PRACTITIONER COMMUNITY**

**Francis J. D'Addario, Contributing Editor**

# THE SEC PROCESS

We walk clients through eight critical steps to reach their goals



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The first step is an assessment of your current environment. What needs improving? What are Security's fixed conditions? What recent changes have impacted Security, such as new business directions, new stakeholders, or a merger or acquisition?



An SEC team made up of former CSOs will engage with you to identify the key risks and determine the continuum of desired outcomes depending on your conditions. We map the solution to your C4R – current circumstances, conditions, culture and resources.



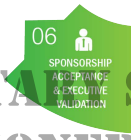
Once we understand the issues and potential barriers, we search our extensive security knowledge base for resources or research data that can be used as a base or to kickstart direction ideas.



Next, our subject matter experts bring their varied experiences and knowledge together to create a plan to help you reach your desired outcome. We call this Collective Knowledge™.



We help determine which other functions the plan should touch and align with. We use the SEC's Unified Risk Oversight™ model to help plan and communicate the value of cross-functional collaboration.



We assist in communicating the value of the project to the business leader accountable for Security's new vision. This in turn assists in communicating the strategy to senior executives from other functions.



Business value metrics are developed for the client team to measure and determine project success for the organization, including key stakeholders.



Last, clients can either take the SEC deliverables and run with them, or we can guide you through the implementation of your plan. At the end of the day, the SEC is here to help you succeed.

**The SEC Process Outcome: Security Leader and Program Success**

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# CHAPTER 5

## Home Safety and Security

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### 5.1 OVERVIEW

Although you cannot ever make your home completely safe and secure against manmade and natural hazards, you can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a victim. There are several proactive steps you can take to make sure your family home is adequately protected.

Review your home’s overall physical safety and security profile and take a close look at how well your family follows precautionary prevention and emergency procedures. Good safety and security habits are just as important as physical improvements.

### 5.2 HOME SAFETY AND SECURITY SURVEY

Family and personal safety are usually the most important reasons for all-hazards awareness and mitigation efforts. Asset security typically is a close second, including our residences and all valued possessions and protected information therein. Most homes and apartments are vulnerable to manmade (accidents and crimes) and natural hazards (seismic, severe weather, etc.).

The good news is that most home injuries and asset losses are preventable. Others are mitigable as you lessen consequences. First and foremost, be informed. Research the historical risks for your community and neighborhood. Check crime, flood, seismic, and storm history



before you invest and make sure insurance is available. Home owner or renter insurance covers most hazards but there may be exclusions. Insurance companies may also provide resources for risk reduction planning like accident, crime and fire prevention.

If earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tornados, or wild fires are a possibility, reliable emergency communications for public safety advisories including evacuation and shelter-in-place are a must. Our ability to plan ahead is valuable. It is not hard to anticipate hazards of the past revisiting in the future.

Fault lines shift. Lightning strikes. Winds blow. People play with fire. If a criminal really wants to break in, chances are that he or she will be successful. Your job is to be aware, equipped, and informed in time to prevent or avoid the harshest consequences of risk.

- Develop good security and safety habits. Lock your doors and windows even when you are home.
- Keep important papers, emergency cash, weapons or ammunition in fire-rated security containers.
- Provision water and nonperishable foods for a manmade or natural catastrophic event. Your ability to shelter-in-place or evacuate as instructed by public safety is consequential.
- Make certain laptops and portable communications devices are logged for insurance coverage, password-protected, patched and backed-up.
- Consider “find me” or remote hard drive destruction software.
- Investigate motion detection lighting inside and outside your home to prevent accidents, alert you or your neighbors to trespass. These devices save energy, provide just-in-time lighting and contain costs for running your household.
- Equip your living space with duress intrusion, smoke, carbon monoxide, radon or other risk detection devices for local alarm and/or remote monitoring.
- Emergency preparedness may include designating an interior safe room with fortified construction, a security/fire rated door, communications, provisions and generator or battery back-up.
- Train for emergencies with licensed, certified instructors.
- Emergency equipment and supplies (first aid kits, fire extinguishers, flashlights, detectors) require inspection, reprovisioning, and recharging on an annual basis.

- When you travel for business or go on vacation, do not make the information public. Only notify need-to-know, trusted persons of your itinerary. Arrange for mail or newspaper delivery suspension.
- Leave a voicemail or out-of-office instructions that you will be unavailable and designate others for urgent communications.
- Begin your security and safety check with the front door and work clockwise around the entire outside of your home. Include all doors and windows, finishing with the back yard, fence and shrubs, gates, and garage.
- Make certain a “go bag” (think wheeled luggage) with absolute essentials is stored in a hallway or closet.
- Shrubbery should never allow hiding places or block the view of your doors or windows. Low profile thorny bushes, transparent fencing, and civilly worded signage can communicate defensible space without being inhospitable to invited guests.
- House or building numbers should be clearly visible from the street. Illuminated numbers are a good idea for both the front and back of the house. This helps police emergency first responders find your home. Urge your neighbors to display their house numbers clearly, too.
- A wide-angle viewer lets you identify a visitor before you open the door. A minimum of 180 degrees visibility in a viewer is recommended.
- Make your home appear occupied at all times. The use of timers or motion units to turn lights, radios, or televisions on and off in different rooms at different times can discourage many criminals.
- Lock your doors and windows. Most intruders do not pick locks, since the time it takes to do so increases their chances of being discovered.
- Be certain that you have a bedroom door that can be locked. You should also have a telephone in the room in case of an emergency.
- Make a point to notice vehicles and people you have not seen before in your neighborhood.
- Get to know your neighbors. Participate in or establish a Neighborhood Watch program. Many burglars say that neighbors who look around and are aware of what is going on in their neighborhood are a great deterrent.
- Always change the locks when you move into a new residence. You never know who else may still have a key. Replace all door strike plates with ones that provide for a hardened core steel rod connected to the strike plate to protrude through the doorjamb and into

the framing studs. Use three-inch hardened wood screws to secure the locking mechanism and strike plate to the door and door frame.

- Work with your landlord or condominium association and neighbors for a building or community risk assessment. Public safety professionals are often available to brief interested groups.

### 5.3 DOORS AND WINDOWS

Minimum home security requires that you take steps to keep intruders from entering your home through any door or window, unless they resort to using destructive force.

Doors and windows that are not locked or that are inadequately secured can provide easy access to your home. Most intruders enter through unlocked doors and windows. Criminals are far less likely to enter your home if access is difficult, visible, noisy, and time-consuming.

When evaluating your home's physical security, take into account all the different types of doors and windows on the property.

- Wood and metal doors
- Door hinge protection
- Sliding doors
- Inactive doors
- Window locks and latches
- Sliding windows
- Double hung windows
- Casement windows
- Iron grilles and burglar bars

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#### 5.3.1 Wood and Metal Doors

- The best exterior doors are metal or solid-core hardwood, at least 1¾" thick.
- Make sure every door to the outside has a dead bolt lock with a minimum 1½" bolt.
- Do not use thumb latch dead bolt locks on doors where the latch is easily accessible through a side panel window.
- Check that lock assemblies on all exterior doors with doorknobs have an anti-friction tongue as a standard. This is extremely important for door locks that do not have dead bolts.

- Do not leave keys in a double-sided keyway dead bolt when the dead bolt is accessible through a side panel window.

### 5.3.2 Door Hinge Protection

If your home has hinged exterior doors that open outward, the hinge pins are on the outside of the home and vulnerable to attack. To protect your door from being lifted from its hinges, follow the simple steps outlined below.

If your door swings out to open, and it has standard duty hinges without locking screws to secure the pins, the following safety measures are recommended:

- a. Drill two holes opposite each other in the center of both hinge plate leaves.
- b. Drive a headless screw or nail into the hole on the door frame side of the hinge plate. Leave a half inch of the screw or nail protruding so that it enters the opposite hole when the door is closed.
- c. Repeat this process for every hinge on the door. Even if the pins are removed, the door still cannot be taken off its hinges.

### 5.3.3 Sliding Doors

Secure sliding doors to keep them from being pushed open or from being pried up and out of the track. A simple way to secure an inside sliding door is to drill a downward sloping hole through the top channel into the top portion of the sliding door frame and insert a pin into the hole.

Sticks or bars may be placed at the bottom of the doorjamb to secure a sliding door, but these can sometimes be forced out of the way. Installing a slide bolt provides minimum security for a sliding door. For additional security, add a key-operated padlock or dead bolt.

### 5.3.4 Inactive Doors

Install flush bolts at the top and bottom of an inactive door. Flush bolts stop an intruder from tampering with them if the doors are locked.

### 5.3.5 Window Locks and Latches

Windows should be secured to eliminate the chance of someone prying them open. Most intruders will avoid breaking glass because it attracts

attention. Window locks, used with other security measures such as good lighting, provide a good deterrent. Lock your windows when you go out, even if you plan to be out for only a few minutes.

- Most windows have latches, although many window latches do not provide ideal security. Provide your windows with additional protection such as a barrel bolt lock. Or, drill small holes in the window frame where the top and bottom windows overlap and insert nails in these holes.
- Make sure all windows, frames, and locks are in good condition.
- When special equipment is used for securing windows, make sure that these devices comply with fire codes and that everyone knows how to use them properly.

**Warning: Leave one window in the bedroom on the ground floor and one window on the second floor available as fire exits.**

### 5.3.6 Sliding Windows

Secure a sliding window by placing a rod or dowel in the sliding track. Most locksmiths and hardware stores sell screw-controlled anti-burglary clamps. These devices are placed in the tracks of windows and sliding glass doors to prevent them from sliding open.

### 5.3.7 Double Hung Windows

Double hung window latches may be pried open. If the window is not used, screw it shut. For double hung windows being used, drill a downward sloping hole into the top of the bottom window, through and into the bottom of the top window. Insert a pin or nail.

### 5.3.8 Casement Windows

Casement windows are generally secure in themselves. Be certain that the latch works properly and that the operator has no excess play in it. If it does, replace the worn hardware. For added security, simply remove the operator from all windows and keep one in a safe place by each room.

### 5.3.9 Iron Grilles and Burglar Bars

Decorative iron grilles for ground-level entrances and windows provide additional security for windows. Due to the danger of fire, decorative iron grilles are not recommended for bedroom windows unless they can be opened from the inside.

If burglar bars are used, they should be installed to hinge outward from the window or door and secured with a double cylinder dead bolt lock. This allows you to exit the window or door in case of emergency.

### 5.3.10 Alarm Systems

The design and installation of an alarm system for your residence should be performed by a security professional.

- Premises signs and window decals are excellent psychological deterrents to the casual intruder.
- Have a strobe light installed at the corner of your residence nearest to the street. The light should be wired to activate when the alarm system is activated. This will help emergency responders.
- Consider the value of security- and safety-equipped residences and the proximity of first responders when searching for a new residence.

## 5.4 EXTERIOR

A residence that is clearly visible to neighbors and the street discourages the potential intruder. Use at least standard lighting levels in your doorways and driveways. You may wish to add motion detection lighting in back of or at the corners. If possible, place lights high enough to prevent tampering.

- Trim shrubs so that windows and doors are in full view from the street. Unobstructed doors and windows are a deterrent because the intruder is forced to work in the open where detection is likely.
- Maintain adequate lighting, especially at vulnerable entry points. Some power companies will install a yard light for a reasonable monthly charge.
- Do not leave ladders and tools outside where burglars can use them to enter your home.
- Expensive equipment and bicycles should be secured when not in use.
- Always keep garage doors locked. CCTV and access control are recommended for multi-dwelling residential buildings.
- Do not hide keys outside your residence. Most hiding spots are relatively obvious and burglars can easily discover them. Invest in a lockbox that can enable first responder access.
- Get a mailbox that is large enough to totally conceal mail, or install a small mail slot in your door that prevents access.

- Do not reveal unnecessary personal information on your mailbox or doorbell. For example, use *M. Jones* instead of *Mary Jones*.

### 5.4.1 Garage Security

Failure to close and lock garage doors presents a serious security problem. Even when garage doors are locked, their locks can often be defeated. Multi-dwelling garages should ideally feature access control equipped with closed circuit television or duress alarm.

- If your overhead garage door rolls on tracks, drill a hole in the track large enough for the shackle of the padlock. Place the padlock through the track hole so it acts as a brace against the door being opened. Steel pins can be used in place of the padlock.
- The door leading from your attached garage into your house should have a dead bolt lock mounted on it. If intruders gain entrance to the garage, they are concealed and might find the tools necessary to continue the entry and burglary of your home.
- When arriving home, be certain that the garage door is completely closed before unlocking the car doors and getting out.
- Electronic garage door openers with automatic locking devices offer good security against burglaries. Always keep the transmitter box that activates these openers in a safe place. It can be stolen and used by a burglar to open your garage door.
- If you suspect that a stranger has discovered the frequency that activates your opener, contact a dealer who sells openers to change the frequency. When on vacation, unplug the transmitter box to safeguard against the garage door being opened by an intruder.
- If you are leaving your home for an extended period of time, locking your garage door from the interior is recommended for additional security.
- Place translucent contact paper or curtains over garage windows. Install a yard light that can be turned on from inside the garage. A well-lighted yard offers security as you go from garage to house at night. You should also be able to turn the yard light on from inside the house.

### 5.4.2 Checklist for Garage Security

- ✓ Always close and lock garage doors.
- ✓ Consider using an automatic garage door opener.
- ✓ Do not leave the garage door opener in plain sight inside your vehicle. If your vehicle is stolen, the thief now has your address

from the insurance papers in the car, the garage door opener, and possibly a spare key to your home.

- ✓ Consider the door leading from the house to the garage as an exterior door. Install a metal or solid-core hardwood door 1¾" thick.
- ✓ Install a viewer with at least 180 degrees of visibility in the door leading into your garage.
- ✓ When taking a trip, secure your garage by placing a common bicycle lock in the garage door track. This will prohibit opening the door from the outside.

## 5.5 OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

The Operation Identification burglary prevention program is an excellent resource for recovering lost and stolen property. Visit their website at <http://www.opid.org/>.

- Mark and photograph all high-value portable property with an identifying mark, such as your state and driver's license number (CA-B1234567). Never use your social security number. Your local public safety department may offer advice on engraving tools or permanent markers to identify your property.
- Make a record of all marked property and keep it in a safety deposit box or other safe location away from valuables. The record should include the identifying mark as well as descriptions and serial numbers of marked items. This information helps you identify stolen property quickly and make it more recoverable.
- Put Operation Identification stickers on windows near the front and back doors of your home. They tell a burglar that property is identified as yours and will be hard to sell to a dealer of stolen goods. (No dealer wants to be arrested with stolen articles, especially if they are easy to trace and identify.) You can get the stickers from your police department.
- Operation Identification numbers, when in the possession of someone other than the owner, can be used as evidence in court.

## 5.6 NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Block Watch clubs and Neighborhood Watch programs can help to reduce high-risk conditions including crime in your neighborhood.



Neighbors watch for emergencies and unusual behaviors and report them to each other and designated public safety agencies.

Block Watchers are trained by public safety professionals to identify and report suspicious, criminal, or high-risk behaviors and conditions. Neighborhood Watch is similar to Block Watch, but it may also implement a complete program of home security surveys and Operation Identification. To organize a Block Watch club or a Neighborhood Watch program, contact your police department. A crime prevention officer will meet with you and your neighbors to discuss these concepts in detail.

### 5.6.1 What to Do to Establish a Network

- Get to know your neighbors and become familiar with their routines. You are going to be partners in watching the activities on your block. Neighbors who look out for each other are the best front-line defense.
- Be observant. Report unusual or suspicious behavior or high risk conditions to local public safety agencies. If suspected criminal activity is observed and it is safe to do so, record, photograph, or write down descriptions of the person(s) and license numbers of any vehicles involved.
- Establish a meeting time and place convenient to all your neighbors.
- Exchange names and contact information with others.
- Above all, be concerned. It is the most effective way to prevent, reduce or mitigate risk and make your neighborhood safe.

### 5.6.2 Once the Network is Established

- Keep a trusted neighbor informed if your house is unoccupied for an extended period. It is important to leave your neighbor a way of reaching you if an emergency arises.
- Look after your neighbor's house when your neighbor is away, and ask your neighbor to look after yours. This includes collecting mail, newspapers, and other deliveries.
- Establish and attend regular neighborhood meetings with your local crime prevention officer. Find out about local crime trends and what you can do to improve them.
- Post Neighborhood Watch and Block Watch signs to let everyone know that your neighborhood is organized to fight crime and promote safety.

## About the Contributing Editor

Francis is a principal of Crime Prevention Associates and emeritus faculty of the Security Executive Council. He is a Certified Protection Professional (CPP), Fraud Examiner (CFE), Community Emergency Responder, Food Defense Coordinator, and Coffee Master.

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Francis was named one of the “25 Most Influential People in Security” in 2009 by *Security* magazine, and was a *CSO* magazine 2007 Compass Award honoree.

He is also the critically acclaimed author of *The Manager’s Violence Survival Guide* (1995), *Loss Prevention through Crime Analysis* (1989), and *Influencing Enterprise Risk Mitigation* (2013).

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