

## Crime Prevention at Construction Sites

The Commerce Department stated in December 2019 that the construction of new homes in the U.S. was at a 13 year high (Market Watch, January 2020). Lee County has seen an increase in permits pulled for all types of housing. This means construction sites are abundant in both residential and commercial areas. The National Equipment Register reports up to \$1 billion in appliances, materials and equipment are stolen from construction sites annually and less than 25 percent is recovered. The most common items stolen include: tools, appliances, heavy equipment, metals (e.g. copper), and lumber. Here are suggestions to make your site less of a target for criminals.

1. Strategically placed video surveillance cameras which if monitored can detect suspicious activity as well as provide proof to identify criminals for prosecution.
2. Security personnel or dogs can provide another layer of protection from criminals.
3. Lock your valuables (raw materials, equipment, appliances) in one secure location with one point of entry. Use heavy duty locks, alarms, as well as mark valuables for easy identification.
4. Lock up equipment cabs and secure keys. Immobilize equipment by disabling it. Lock oil and gas tank caps.
5. Keep your site well-lit with motion-activated lights.
6. Park equipment centrally in a secure well lit area away from the fence perimeter.
7. Make sure your site has solid fencing that is high enough to deter climbing, difficult to gain access underneath and secure gates.
8. Post warning signs to keep unauthorized persons off site. Contractors in LEE County can contact the LEE Building Industry Association (LEE BIA) or in Cape Coral, the Cape Coral Construction Industry Association (CCIA) for the official statute compliant Construction Site “No Trespassing” signs. The signs were developed in cooperation with LCSO and the Building Industry.
9. Remove equipment and materials from site when not needed. Do not use as storage.
10. Lastly, encourage adjoining properties to report suspicious activity. .