

# GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT'S BUSINESS WATCH

# PARTICIPANTS HANDBOOK



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# What is Business Watch?



The Business Watch program establishes a formal network for concerned merchants to communicate with others in the business community and law enforcement regarding crime related problems.

The program also teaches merchants to crime-resist their own properties and to watch over neighboring businesses and to report any suspicious activity to the police.

A qualified member of the Garden City Police Department will do a SECURITY SURVEY for participating businesses.

# Why Do We Need Business Watch?

The security of the business and its employees depends upon the steps taken to reduce the risk of crime occurring. No police department can effectively protect life and property without the support and cooperation of the citizens it serves.



Insurance companies estimate that 30% of all business failures are directly attributable to losses from crime. No business is immune from the growing menace of burglary, robbery, shoplifting, internal theft and credit card and check fraud.

With over 30 billion dollars lost annually, 33% of this in the private sector, businesses small and large need to develop ways to reduce the criminal opportunity. Because small businesses are 24

times more likely to incur crime losses than a large business no merchant should feel his or business is too small to benefit from this program.

Take control of what happens in your community and in our business community, and lessen your chances of becoming a victim.

**REMEMBER...** crimes against business are usually crime of opportunity. If you make it easy for someone to steal from you, chances are someone will.

## SECURITY SURVEY

The security needs of each business facility are unique. Even businesses such as retail stores having similar layouts and purposes require measures tailored to their specific security vulnerability. Most business applications will have survey emphasis on:

**PERIMETER SECURITY/ACCESS CONTROL**

**INVENTORY/**

**INTERNAL  
THEFT**

**CONTROL**

**SHOPLIFTING/  
ROBBERY  
PREVENTION**

**CASH HANDLING**

**EMPLOYEE  
SECURITY**

A qualified member of the Garden City Police Department upon request and availability will do security survey for participating businesses.

**SECURITY  
SURVEY**

The security needs of each business facility are unique. Even businesses such as retail stores having similar

*The primary areas of concern starting from the outside in are:*

- LIGHTING**
- DOORS**
- WINDOWS**
- ROOF**
- ENTRANCES**
- STORAGE AREA**
- ALARM SYSTEMS**

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THEFT**

**CONTROL**

**SHOPLIFTING/  
ROBBERY  
PREVENTION**

**CASH HANDLING**

**EMPLOYEE  
SECURITY**

A qualified member of the Garden CityPolice Department upon request and

**LIGHTING**

Good exterior and interior lighting is the single most cost effective deterrent. If a burglar can't be seen, he won't be caught.

Make your business a showplace that people passing will

availability will do security survey for participating businesses.

**BURGLA  
RY  
PREVEN  
TION**

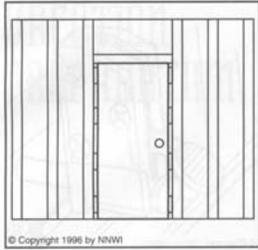
Any measure that you can take that would cause a burglar to increase his chances of being caught is prevention. Crimes against business are *usually crimes of opportunity*; by using by using visibility, time and noise against the burglar you can decrease his opportunity.

The primary areas of concern starting from the outside working in is:

be notice. It will not only advertise your business, but light up anyone who is trying to get inside as well. Light up the inside too, so that if he does get in, the burglar will be visible through windows and glass doors.

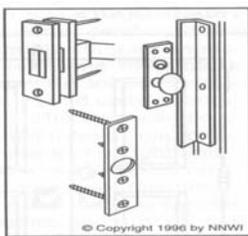
Don't let a burglar work in private keep shrubbery trimmed and debris and advertisements away from the windows and doors.

## DOORS



Each entrance to your business must be treated as a system. The door itself, the lock, hinges and jamb are equally important system components. If any one component is inadequate, *So is the entire system.*

Hollow core wood doors are absolutely unacceptable, for security purposes. Solid core wood, metal or plate glass doors should be used instead.



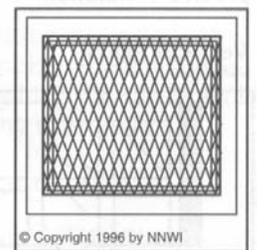
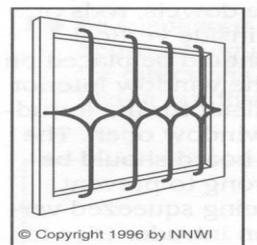
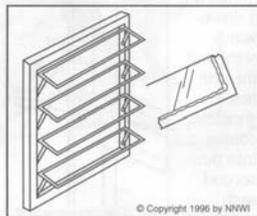
Even the best equipment can fail if not properly installed or maintained.

Close or cover all gaps or spaces that could be used for prying the door or lock. Make sure dead-bolt locks are secured in a strong jamb with at least a 1" throw.

**Main** Maintain a conscientious **KEY CONTROL**. Keys issued to employees should be stamped "**DO NOT DUPLICATE**". Install new locks and issue new numbered keys whenever employees leave their jobs.

## WINDOWS

Use only high quality burglar resistant glass or glass substitutes. Make sure all of the window hardware fits properly, is tight and maintained.



Louvered windows offer little or no security and should be replaced with bars or grating.

## ROOF ENTRANCES

Keep all shrubbery and debris away from climbing platforms, ladders and other roof entrances. Install secure locks on all hatches and doors. Make sure they are secure at closing time each day. Roof entrances are a good place for an alarm system.

## STORAGE AREAS

Keep them well lighted with the doors locked. Don't make them easily accessible from the main business areas. Never allow customer traffic through storage areas. Don't allow your storage area to be used as a hiding place or escape route. Remove your most valuable merchandise from display cases, if possible, and secure them in a safe or storage area.

If possible arrange your store so the cash register and safe are visible from the outside front store window. Secure the cash register to the counter but leave your empty cash drawers open after hours. This will deter someone looking for cash and prevent your register from being damaged in his effort to force it open.



## ALARM SYSTEMS

Alarms themselves will not prevent a burglary, but if installed properly will deter and/or detect most burglaries and help to afford you peace of mind.

The foremost consideration in purchasing an alarm system is to be sure you are dealing with a reputable alarm company that will be in business when you need them for service. You need to know:

*Are they licensed by the State?*

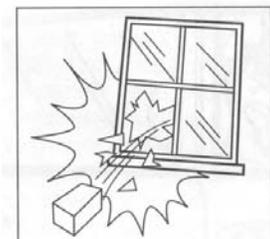
*Are their controls U.L. listed?*

*Do they offer 24 hours service?*

*Are they monitoring your alarm through a Central Station?*

## What To Do In The Event Of A Burglary

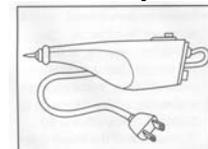
When arriving at the business casually observe the area around the building for any vehicles or persons loitering around.



Visually check the exterior for breaks in windows or doors.



If you discover a burglary, do not enter the building, if you are already inside leave immediately. Call the police department from the closest safe phone. When the police department arrives advise them of possible hiding places and let them go inside to check the building, stay outside. Once the police department has determined that no criminals are inside and no property is needed for evidence *begin to make inventory to determine your loss.*



Engraving tools are available from the Crime Prevention Bureau to help identify your valuable property.

Make sure that points of entry are secured and that temporary repairs will provide security until permanent repairs are made.

# ROBBERY PREVENTION



*Robbery* is the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, control or custody of another person by force, or by threat of force or violence, and/or putting the victim in fear of his safety.

The difference between most burglaries and all robberies is a frightening one *you are there*. Robbery is a dangerous crime because most robbers carry weapons and the potential for them to use the weapon if provoked is very real.

The primary areas of concern are:

## **LOOK SAFE & SECURE**

## **SPOTLIGHT CRIME**

## **LOOK FOR DANGER**

## **BE IN CHARGE**

## **CASH CONTROL**

## **ALARM SYSTEMS**

## **LOOK SAFE & SECURE**

Keep your business clean, uncluttered and well stocked. Try to get out from behind the counter when store is empty. *Keep Active*. Robbers prefer brief confrontations and many will be discouraged if it take too much time to get you back behind the cash register.

## **SPOTLIGHT CRIME**

Good visibility is important for two reasons. It allows employees to observe suspicious persons loitering either inside or outside your business. It also increases the possibility that someone outside,

perhaps the police, will observe a robbery if it happens. Needless to say: robbers do not wish to be seen by a passing policeman with a gun in their hand while pulling a robbery.

Front doors and windows should be kept clear of signs and posters to allow good, two-way visibility at your cash register area.

The exterior of your business and any parking areas should be well lighted.

Keep counters at a height so that employees can see customers through out the store. Special display, racks and carousels should not obscure visibility. Special mirrors or closed circuit television can be used in strategic locations to help employees monitor the entire store.

## **LOOK FOR DANGER**



Always be alert to potential problems. No one knows better than an informed employee what is “*out of place*”.

Check “*casing sports*” periodically places such as outdoor phones, dark areas, occupied cars parked for unusually long periods of time etc., from which would be robbers might be casing your business. Make note of people who appear to be loitering or watching you. Try to make eye contact with anyone who may be a would be robber. If suspicious persons remain, call the police and tell them where you are and what you see. Doing this openly may scare the person away and the police will welcome your call.

## **BE IN CHARGE**

A robber does not want to be identified. It is safer a rob a total stranger than

with someone who may remember the robber.

Be sociable, greet every person who comes in the store. Look each customer directly in the eye. This kind of a “*positive approach*” is discouraging to would be robbers because it takes away their element of surprise. It makes it harder for them to loiter and watch you secretly and threatens them with the possibility of identification later on.

Be especially suspicious of people wearing garments which could conceal weapons, particularly unseasoned clothing such as a heavy coat on summer days. People who enter without having parked a car where you can see it. Customers who loiter over trivial items, they could waiting for you to be alone in the store. Also use other customers in the store, ask them if the suspicious person is with them. This will usually cause the customer to look at the person, increasing the possibility of

identification, or defeating any plans to rob you.

## **CASH CONTROL**



One of the strongest deterrents to robbery is to *advertise and practice sound cash control policy*. By keeping the lowest possible amount of cash on hand and letting people know it, your business will become a less desirable target.

Adopt a cash on hand policy; efforts to pay for merchandise with large bills should be met with a polite request for a smaller denomination. Initiate a policy of accepting no large bills after a certain time.

Train employees to monitor cash levels regularly and to place in a “drop safe” or locked money chest promptly. *Use bait money, record the serial numbers of bills and place them in the money tray under the large denominations.*

A good deposit procedure is a logical extension of cash control. *Money should be deposited as often as possible.* Vary your deposit schedule and carry your deposit in different ways. If possible have 2 people make the deposit. Take a quick look outside prior to leaving to ensure that there are no suspicious persons outside.

## **ALARM SYSTEMS**



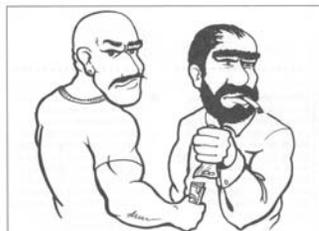
One of the most important factors to consider is the safety with which the alarm can be activated. If it requires that a button be pushed it could easily be perceived as a “*unexpected move* “. An alarm, which can be activated, less obviously is preferable. Two recommended types are the “*money clip or bill trap*” and the pressure pad on the floor. Closed circuit television with recording capabilities

is also a consideration here.

## **What To Do In The Event Of A Robbery**

An actual robbery is a potentially explosive confrontation, yet most robberies are over in a manner of minutes with no physical injury. Since your main concern is to prevent, if possible any violence during the robbery, it is vitally important that all of your employees be taught how to handle those few minutes in a way that will promote the safety of both employees and customers.

### ***KEEP IT SHORT***



The robber will most likely be nervous, the longer the robbery

takes, the more nervous he may become, so give him what he wants as quickly as you can. Tell the robber in advance of any unexpected moves you may have to make and be polite and as accommodating as possible.

### ***OBSERVE***



### ***DON'T FIGHT***

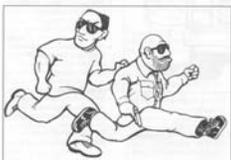
This is no time for impulsive heroics. Your chance of success is not good and the loss of money is not worth the death or serious injury of you or someone else in the store.

Observe as much as possible without being obvious; try to mentally record as much as possible about the robber. The more you can remember, the better the chances of the police apprehending

the robber. Physical features are more important than clothing, which can be changed or discarded. Try to write down this information as soon as possible.

Color of hair, eyes and skin,  
Facial features,  
Approximate age, height and build,  
Unusual marks: scars and tattoos,  
Speech peculiarities, accents and mannerisms,  
Jewelry and clothing.  
Carrying anything?

### ***DON'T CHASE THE ROBBER***



Observe the direction of travel; type of vehicle, color, license plate, and companions and as much of anything as you can *from inside the building*.

### ***CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY***



Call without delay 9-1-1, stay on the phone with the police until you are told to hang up, and then remain by the phone. If possible, close the business and lock the door.

Ask witness to remain until police arrive, but *don't* compare observations. Protect any potential evidence such as fingerprints, demand notes, or anything the robber may have left behind. *Do Not Touch anything.*



When you are sure the robber is gone step outside to meet the police when they arrive. *That way they will know the robber is gone and that you are safe.*

### ***IN CASE OF ROBBERY NOTIFY POLICE, FILL***

### ***IN THE BLANKS AND GIVE TO THE FIRST POLICE OFFICER ON THE SCENE.***

## **SHOPLIFTING**

SHOPLIFTING is the *largest* monetary crime in the U.S. Each year retailers lose billions of dollars in the pockets, coats and bags of shoplifters through retail fraud.

The primary areas of concern are:

### ***WHO DOES THE SHOPLIFTING***

### ***PAY ATTENTION***

### ***ALERT EMPLOYEES***

### ***KNOW WHAT TO WATCH FOR***

### ***KNOW YOUR RIGHTS***

### ***WHO DOES THE SHOPLIFTING***

Juvenile offenders account for about 50% of all shoplifting and they do it on a dare or just for kicks. Youths expect the storeowners and courts to go easy on them because of their age. This should not be the case; *all offenders should be aggressively prosecuted.*

Impulse shoplifters are those who do not “plan “ to steal but have the opportunity presents it and they take advantage of it.

Alcoholics, vagrants and drug addicts are people who have a physical need to steal. You must be aware that although people under the influence of drugs may be clumsy in their attempts to steal, *they maybe violent.*

Kleptomaniacs are driven by a physiological need to steal. Although they may have little or no need for those things they steal it is up to the storeowner to diagnose this. Shoplifting is shoplifting.

Professional shoplifters are in the business of theft. These persons are

harder to spot and are highly skilled. But they will also generally steal items of high demand, knowing this you can limit his opportunity to get at these items.

### ***PAY ATTENTION***

The best way to prevent shoplifting is to *pay constant attention to your customer.* Great every customer you come in contact with. This is good for business but not for shoplifters who want to avoid attention and contact with store personal. When potential shoplifters know they are being watched they will be deterred from committing their criminal act. Let customers know you are aware of their presence and you will deter shoplifting.

### ***ALERT EMPLOYEES***

An alert employee watches the hands and the eyes of their customers. Install store mirrors and viewing devices so you can both deter and observe shoplifting. Closely help and supervise

all customers that use your fitting room. Don't place more than one valuable item on the counter at a time. Lock display counters. Keep track of your merchandise; beware of any sudden unexplained disappearance of merchandise in the present of customers.

### ***KNOW WHAT TO WATCH FOR***

A customer who distracts you while an accomplice pockets items. A loitering customer that makes no attempt to purchase an item. A group of persons gathered around a display counter. Open purses, shopping bags and packages from other stores that are placed on merchandise counters.

### ***KNOW YOUR RIGHTS***

By posting warning signs you can *aggressively advertise against* shoplifting in your business. By using warnings that you will prosecute all shoplifters and other visual deterrents in

key store locations, you can put the seed of doubt in the shoplifter's mind. Following a suspected shoplifter lets the shoplifter know that he has been found out. He may become nervous or "drop" the stolen merchandise before leaving the store. It will also prevent additional items from being stolen.

Michigan Law Public Act 20 of 1988 created a new two-tier criminal definition of Retail Fraud that includes shoplifting, price tag, switching and fraudulent refunding. This act has two important categories that these crimes fall under. Retail Fraud I a two-year felony involves property with a value over \$ 100.00. Retail Fraud II a ninety-three day misdemeanor involves property with a value under \$ 100.00. Note that if a person has one or more convictions under Retail Fraud II, they may be charged under the felony Retail Fraud I.

This law gives you the right: to stop and detain a person who you have reasonably believed has stolen, or was attempting to steal your merchandise: to recover the stolen merchandise: to request identification

from the suspect and to request they sign a voluntary admission: call the police and request criminal prosecution from your local prosecutor.



Most importantly develop a policy or procedure for handling shoplifting and have all New employees given this information.

## **INTERNAL THEFT**

Insurance companies estimate that 30% of small business failures are directly attributable to internal theft. Here are some positive steps for businesses that will substantially reduce the risk of internal theft.

The primary areas of concern are:

**PAPERWORK  
CASH CONTROL  
SHIPPING/  
RECEIVING  
KNOW YOUR  
EMPLOYEE-  
PAPERWORK**

Good paperwork, the way you keep track of everything that enters

and leaves your business, is a key element in your fight against internal theft. Your records must tell you where things are, when and how they got there and who was involved in getting them there.

The less usual transactions constitute the greater risk for both error and dishonesty. Always use successively numbered forms for the recording of transactions. Have all voided entries checked by a supervisor immediately. Account for all numbered forms daily. Investigate discrepancies as soon as they appear. On merchandise returns or refunds, require a dated receipt or proof of purchase and the name and address of the customer.

## **CASH CONTROL**



Forbid the operation of cash registers by unauthorized personnel. Never allow employee coats, packages or purses near the register. Each operator should have his/her own register and drawer. An operator should never do his own tally, and access to internal memory/tape

backups should always be kept locked.

A good deposit procedure would involve two persons making the deposit. Remember that as in all areas of your business keep the operational and accounting functions separate. Never allow the person responsible for receiving goods, or money to do the accounting for it. *It allows too many tempting opportunities for dishonesty.*

### **SHIPPING AND RECEIVING**



Restrict access to these areas. Compare incoming shipments with packaging slips before signing the receipt. Verify carrier and addressee against the shipper on outbound shipments. Supervise on and off loading of valuables.

### **KNOW YOUR EMPLOYEE**

In selecting employees require a comprehensive written application and oral interview. Carefully check references and their credibility.

Be aware of their likes and dislike, motivations, goals, attitudes, emotional and financial problems. Promote a feeling of participation through incentive programs, advancement and recognition. The morale of your employees is vital to the success and security of your business.

Employees must be thoroughly trained and frequency re-briefed on important operating procedures and company policies.

### **IF THE PROBLEM ALREADY EXISTS**

When discovered, dishonesty must be dealt with swiftly, firmly and visibly. Do not allow internal theft to become a routine fringe benefit of employment.

Remember that your security procedures must be:

Reasonable, Usable, Streamlined, Appropriate, Weighted towards the highest potential for loss Faithfully employed and maintained, Consistently enforced with punishment for infraction and reward for compliance.

# **CHECK/CREDIT CARD FRAUD**



The incidence of check and credit card fraud is on the rise. New developments in technology have only aided the criminal in his pursuits.

Primary areas of concern are:

### **BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH FRAUD**

### **HOW TO EXAMINE A CHECK**

### **HOW TO EXAIME A CREDIT CARD**

### **CHECK I.D. OF YOUR CUSTOMER**

### **BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH FRAUD**

Watch for the same customer making two purchases near but not over your "floor limit ". Nervousness while

making the transaction, excessively talkative or especially anxious to regain possession of his I. D., check or card. The customer tries to rush employees or come into the business at closing time. The customer cannot or will not produce identification. Choices the customer makes are made without regard to size, color, style or price. The customer insists on taking unaltered garments, normally installed or delivered items with him. Inconsistencies with the appearance of the customer and the type of credit card, for example, "Travel and Entertainment" and "Gold Card" held by 18 year old.

### **HOW TO EXAMINE A CHECK**

Examine the date; do not accept checks unless the date on the check is current. Look for anything out of place on the check, poor quality printing and spelling errors. Since most "bad" or "NSF" checks are numbered less than 200 avoid accepting these. Also check to see if the check number corresponds to the magnetic coding on the bottom of the check.

Verify the bank, if you're not familiar with the bank it's drawn on, call the bank and check. Does the "ABA" number correspond to the bank location and to the magnetic coding on the bottom of the check?

Make sure the numerical amount and the written amount match. Do not accept checks where the amounts do not agree with each other. Has the amount been altered, erased or changed?

Check the handwriting, spacing and color of ink. Look closely at the written amount for "raised lettering". Example: nine dollars altered to "ninety dollars".

### **HOW TO EXAMINE A CREDIT CARD**



Check the expiration date for an expired or "stale" card. Check the physical appearance of the card, look at the colors, the embossed date, name and card number. If it doesn't look right, it may be counterfeit. Any card abnormalities such as too thick, heavy, light or

has rough edges should be examined.



Make sure the card had the magnetic strips and signature block on the back. Make sure the signature matches the signature on the sale draft.

Holograms and photographs are now printed onto the credit card and are hard to forge and easy to check. Use the credit card verification service (periodic listing or computer check) on all credit card purchases.

### **HOW TO CHECK IDENTIFICATION**

Triple check signatures on the check/credit sales draft; make sure they match both the credit card and the driver's license. Have them sign in your presence while you retain the credit cards and identification. If the criminal has to make his signature quickly and without hesitation he may slip up and misspell the name or gross differences in the form in the form and shape of the letters will be obvious.

Accept only official government issued identification cards. Accept only those identifications that you are familiar with.

Check the physical information given with the customer. Make sure that another photo has not been laminated over the original.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT FRAUD**

Try to hold onto the check or credit card and the signed sales draft. Don't let on that you suspect fraud. Leave the suspect with the impression that everything you're doing is standard procedure. Try to alert another employee. Call the verification service on all purchases. As soon as you have identified your business and the checking account or credit card number make your suspicions know. Most authorization centers are equipped to assist you on the spot, including alerting the police department. If the suspect leaves write down as good a description of him as you can: height, weight, hair and eye color, skin color, clothing, vehicle description, license plate number and direction of

travel. *Don't try to apprehend the criminal; don't risk your well-being.*

*WHAT ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD KNOW.....*

## **ROBBERY PREVENTION**

**MAKE THE STORE ATTRACTIVE TO CUSTOMERS, UNATTRACTIVE TO ROBBERS.**

- ✓ Keep the store neat and clean.
- ✓ Keep it well stocked. When there are no customers in the store, get away from the sales counter by sweeping, dusting, stocking, etc.

**KEEP THE SALES COUNTER IN CLEAR VIEW FROM OUTSIDE THE STORE**



- ✓ Move any posters or displays that block the register from view outside.
- ✓ Make sure you can see out and the police or passerby can see in.
- ✓ After dark, remove any display a robber could possibly hide behind.

**SPOT POSSIBLE HIDING PLACES OUTSIDE THE STORE**



Know the direction of travel in your area. North, South, East and West. Notice possible escape routes from the store.



Locate outside phone booths or other hiding places. After dark, observe lighting and dark corners.

**KEEP ALERT AT ALL TIMES**

- Notice what is going on outside the store.

- Be aware of cars parked across the street or off to one side of the lot.



- Look for anyone who maybe watching the store or loitering in or around it.
- If they do not leave, call the police and ask for a patrol check.

***GIVE A FRIENDLY GREETING TO EVERYONE WHO ENTERS THE STORE***

- Look them directly in the eyes.
- Ask the customer ahead of someone suspicious: Are you together? The customer will usually turn around to look at the person and then maybe to

help make identification.

- Ask persons alone if they need assistance. Customers like the attention and robbers don't.

***KEEP THE CASH REGISTER FUND TO A MINIMUM***

- Drop all \$10 and \$20 bills as soon as you receive them. Drop all checks and food stamps.
- Let customers see you making drops, and tell them why you are doing it.
- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bill possible.
- Keep marked money in your till. Record the serial numbers on the suspect identification sheet kept under

the cash register drawer. If you are robbed give this to the police.

***TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS AFTER DARK***

- Drop money into your safe. Don't hide it in a drawer or under the counter.
- Check each night to see that outside lights are on and working.
- Operate one register late at night through early morning. Open the empty unused register drawer and tip it to display.
- Run an "empty register" ... just \$5's, \$1's, and change.

***IN CASE OF ROBBERY NOTIFY POLICE AND FILL IN THE BLANKS. GIVE TO THE FIRST POLICE OFFICER ON THE SCENE.***

**Notice to sender: This notice must be sent by register mail, return receipt requested deliverable to addressee only to the person who made the check.**

***A COPY OF THE NOTICE NEEDS TO BE KEPT BY SENDER***

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**This is to inform you that I am in receipt of a check from you: (name of person on check)**

**Dated \_\_\_\_\_ Made Payable to (name of business) \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Bank Drawn On  
Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**This check was presented to me in the usual course of business, and was returned to me from the said bank marked-**

- **Insufficient Funds**
- **Account Closed**

**In accordance with the Michigan Statute you are hereby given five (5) days notice that said check has not been paid, and if you do not pay the amount due there on/within five (5) days of receipt of this notice, this shall serve as evidence of intent to defraud, and a request to the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney of Wayne County will be made to take criminal action against you by me.**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_**

**Address \_\_\_\_\_**

**Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2001**

