

## **Atherton Police Department Notice - Construction Burglaries**

### **Background**

Construction sites in Atherton are frequently targeted for theft. In fact, they are one of the more common burglary crimes encountered in our jurisdiction. The thieves typically cut the locks on the cyclone fence gates and use drills or torches to open job boxes or cargo containers. They target tools and materials such as copper.



While we do our best to patrol sites at night and on weekends, it is impossible for our Officers to be everywhere at once. This is especially true when we have service calls or incidents which prevent us from proactively patrolling.

### **Enforcement**

To help combat this problem, the Town of Atherton has implemented strict construction hours. As the Police Department patrols during “off hour” periods, we will contact people who are on job sites to ensure they are authorized.

### **Prevention**

To prevent construction site thefts, we recommend that no valuable items be kept at the site when construction crews are not present. Of course, this may not be practical or the contractor may be willing to tolerate some risk.

If tools and equipment remain on site, we recommend that the site be secured and lit. The gate should be locked with a chain / padlock which can be easily seen by a patrol car using a spotlight. Motion sensor lights also act as a deterrent to those who target construction sites.

Cameras can be useful in collecting evidence after a site has been burglarized. But, given the challenges with lighting and resolution, we rarely are able to garner enough evidence to track down those responsible. Unless the cameras are actively monitored, they are not a good prevention mechanism.

## **Proactive Efforts / Alarms**

The Dewalt Tool Corporation markets a “Mobile Lock” device. The Atherton Police Department owns one of these alarms and circulates it among construction sites in an effort to catch burglars in the act.



This device has an integrated cell phone, vibration sensor, and GPS locator. It can be customized to arm / disarm itself automatically at specified times. The alarm will call up to three telephone numbers and play a message if it’s activated. It can also send “text” messages.

The Mobile Lock is also available in a motion sensor “kit” which allows it to cover an enclosed area (such as a garage where tools are stored).

The alarm requires a monthly subscription of approximately \$15. This is to provide telecommunications connectivity (via Sprint) so that the alarm can message if activated.

The Atherton Police Department provides alarm monitoring services at no charge. We encourage any construction company which purchases a Mobile Lock to configure it so that it calls us directly. Such a configuration will expedite our response.

Should you procure this device and wish the Atherton Police Department to monitor it, please call the Atherton Police Department dispatcher at 650-688-6500. You will need to provide: the address where the unit is installed, the Electronic Serial Number (ESN), hours of activation, and contact information for the responsible party. In turn, we will provide you the telephone number the device needs to call. Providing the ESN is critical, as the telephone voice recording only announces the ESN; it does not give the location where the alarm is deployed.

The unit costs approximately \$550. The kit with motion sensor costs approximately \$800. It is available through security and tool distributors. It is also available on Amazon.Com.

When you are finished with your project in Atherton, the device can be deployed in another jurisdiction, though we ask that you notify us of the change and remove us from the device’s dialing list.

More information about the Dewalt Mobile Lock device can be found here:

<http://www.dewaltmobilelock.com/>