

# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



*Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, or CPTED, examines crime problems and the ways various features of the environment afford opportunities for undesirable and unwanted behaviours. CPTED strives to eliminate criminal opportunities in and around your property by identifying problem areas and effecting change. Where these techniques have been applied to problem settings, crimes of opportunity have decreased by as much as 90%.*

## HOW CAN I MAKE MY PROPERTY SAFER?

CPTED simply involves three basic and overlapping principles:

Natural Surveillance	Access Control	Territorial Reinforcement
Provides opportunities to see and be seen. Most Criminals try to find a way into an area where they will not be easily observed.	Create both real and perceptual barriers to entry and movement.	Used to define private, semi-public and public space. Defining private space creates a sense of ownership and provides cues about who belongs in a place and what they are allowed to do.

## A NATURAL SURVEILLANCE REVIEW

Start by taking a fresh look at your property's natural surveillance potential. Ask yourself:

- Are the views of your property obscured from the street or your neighbours?
- Are there any adult-sized hiding spots around your doors or windows?
- Are there areas of contrast and shadow where intruders can linger undetected?

*If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, natural surveillance needs to be improved.*

Consider adding motion activated lights, trimming up trees, trimming back bushes or altering fencing so that intruders can be kept under observation. Windows and furniture placement can also support observation.

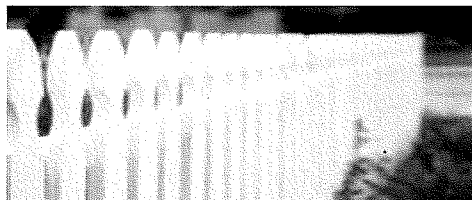
## ACCESS CONTROL REVIEW

Next, take a fresh look at your property's access control. Ask yourself:

- Do people routinely violate my property and/or fence lines?
- Can this be done in an inconspicuous manner?
- Do people access my property in ways other than I intended?
- Do any existing access routes lack natural surveillance?
- As a result of the placement or existence of outdoor furniture, equipment and/or utilities, is there potential to access an otherwise inaccessible window, door or opening?

*If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, your property's access control needs to be improved. Consider the following:*

- Better control of undesired movements onto and within your property.
- Install landscaping, fencing or barriers to increase the visibility of anyone breaching a boundary.
- Reinforce an existing boundary that's already been subject to trespass.
- Driveways, sidewalks, paths and gardens guide movement through a site.
- Gates and doors limit entry to a site or building.
- When selecting landscaping materials, consider choosing species with thorns.
- Where possible, keep furniture, equipment and/or utilities, away from otherwise inaccessible windows, doors or openings. Strong access control decreases crime opportunity.



## A TERRITORIAL REVIEW

Finally, take a fresh look at your property's territoriality. Ask yourself:

- Do strangers regularly trespass on my property?
- Is my property being used as a short cut?
- Does my property have an un-lived in or un-kept look?
- Are there under utilized sections of my property where the public is invited and people loiter?



*If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, your property's territoriality needs to be improved. To rectify this, create or extend a sphere of influence around your property by:*

- Strategically placing markers, flowerbeds, low fencing, walls, hedges, and signage.
- Better and/or more timely maintenance.
- Where the public is invited, assign a purpose to "leftover spaces".
- Create an "illusion of occupancy" (Keep your lawn maintained, driveway shovelled and pick your mail. Have someone check on your property and use lights with time.

## INTERIOR APPLICATIONS

CPTED is equally effective when applied to building or store interiors. Studies have shown that the application of CPTED techniques reportedly decrease security problems by up to 50% and increased sales by as much as 33%.

## MAXIMIZING CPTED BENEFITS

CPTED provides the opportunity to design in crime prevention and design out crime. For maximum benefits, CPTED should be applied at the design or planning stage when these benefits can be achieved at little or no cost.

## SECURITY AUDITS

**Hamilton Police Service Crime Prevention Branch provides FREE Business/Commercial Security Audits.**

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies are effective when applied to building or store interiors. Studies have shown that the application of CPTED techniques may reportedly decrease security problems by up to 50% and increase sales by as much as 33%. Hamilton Police Service Crime Prevention Officers can conduct a thorough assessment of your business environment.

**For further information on this service please contact the  
Crime Prevention Office at 905-546-4900**

## DON'T FORGET ABOUT TARGET HARDENING

*For maximum crime prevention benefits, target hardening should be implemented alongside CPTED principles.*

***Keep all doors and windows locked and secured!***

*Content of this fact sheet is provided courtesy of Peel Regional Police Service.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION TOPICS PLEASE VISIT OUR  
WEBSITE AT [WWW.HAMILTONPOLICE.ON.CA](http://WWW.HAMILTONPOLICE.ON.CA) OR PLEASE CONTACT:**

**HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE – CRIME PREVENTION**  
155 King William Street, Hamilton, Ontario Phone: 905-546-4900 Fax: 905-546-4720