The Thanksgiving holiday break is approaching. This holiday break (of all of them during a calendar year) traditionally has the most cargo thefts associated with it. That said, be pro-active: confirm that shipment dates/times coincide with your customers’ “open” hours during this holiday time frame. If they don’t, take the necessary precautions to reduce the risk of those shipments being staged or stored prior to actual delivery dates. Be sure, if you must, that your assets in-transit are either very safely secured and/or being consistently monitored. If you have technology at your disposal, such as GPS tracking, use it to its fullest extent possible—both in-transit and in stationary storage. All technological assets, whatever they may be, need to be deployed during these holiday periods.

If you must leave a rig or loaded trailer unattended look for a secure lot or choose a public facility that is well lit and utilizes surveillance equipment. If a trailer must remain loaded and unattended during this period consider backing it up tight against the wall of a building. Make it hard to penetrate. If you must ship cargo over this period be sure that, in the event the unthinkable happens and you cargo is stolen in-transit, somewhere a shipping list with complete descriptions of the goods being shipped is readily accessible and can quickly be provided to law enforcement officials.

You should also be paying close attention to any warehousing and distribution facilities—particularly ones that won’t be staffed over this period. Please Read each of these friendly reminders:

- Fully test all your security alarm and surveillance systems to ensure they are in proper working order
- Ensure your back-up cellular alarm system is fully functional
- Check ALL pieces of security equipment that are backed up by batteries. Make sure all batteries are at full strength. If not, replace them
- Perform a full perimeter check of your facility(s). Look at your fencing, all of your windows, all of your doors, as well as your roofs to ensure they can be properly secured
- One evening this week make sure all of your exterior lighting is functional – perform a check and replace/repair any lighting units that are defective BEFORE the holiday weekend starts
- Think about leaving more lights, than usual, “on” inside your facilities during this period – particularly ones that can be seen from the outside
- Don’t make it easier for potential burglars by leaving anything outdoors (or within a warehouse) that they could use to help facilitate a crime
- TODAY, look at your company’s alarm call list and make sure it is current/accurate with those at your central station
- That same on-call list should be current with your local police department – check to make sure
- Remind all the employees that are on your call list to respond immediately to any calls from your alarm monitoring contractor
- Treat ALL alarms with the same degree of diligence
- Have law enforcement respond to ALL alarm events - even when the system is suspected of mal-functioning (you can worry about any false alarm “fees” after the weekend is over)
- If you don’t currently employ a guard service consider hiring a contracted guard entity just for this specific holiday time period
- Contact your local law enforcement and request, if it’s possible, additional patrols in the area during this period
- If your facility is not gated, make it as easy as possible for a passing patrol car to “see” your critical points of entry. Keep as many lanes open as possible to allow that patrol car to drive around your facility
- Talk with your neighbors – offer to assist them by remaining diligent if they, in turn, will do the same for you. Share basic contact information with them
- Remove any keys from all warehouse equipment (such as forklifts) and place them in a secure location
- In the unfortunate event that someone is able to illicitly enter your facility make sure all important and sensitive documents are locked up – a “clean desk” policy should be in place during these periods