

# How Secure Is Your Equipment?

*Security in today's economic climate is like the Sword of Damocles on unprepared equipment premises. Construction as an industry is subject to all forms of burglary and theft. And, as the number of such incidents increase, naturally the security industry has grown. Today, there are many companies offering security services, ranging from the purely physical watchman to the newest in high technology. In this issue, Equipment Journal reports on one very progressive company in the field.*

Now that you've invested in that expensive loader, excavator, articulated truck or crane, it's time to put it to work.

But will the equipment still be in your yard or your shop when you show up in the morning?

Unfortunately, that's a question far too many people in the construction industry have had to concern themselves with.

As Joe Wilson points out, though, equipment security does not have to be an oxymoron. Indeed, it is possible.

The key is a security system that both can verify precisely when and where an intrusion is taking place and, if one is, can prompt a timely response.

Wilson is Vice-President of Canadian Operations for Sonitrol Security Systems.

"It's Verified," said Wilson. "So when it's the raccoon that goes across the field, we don't do anything about it. When it's a person, we do something about it."

And doing something about it carries more clout with the fact Sonitrol can verify a detection through audio and/or video in its computer based, completely integrated system.

Ranking behind only an officer in distress, a verified robbery in progress and a verified burglary in process are second and third respectively in police response priority across North America. An unverified burglary ranks seventh, which means a long delay if it's a busy night for police.

The reason is that the lack of verification increases drastically the likelihood of costly false alarms.

"You're going to send the police three times, then you're going to get a little piece of paper in the mail that says, 'You're on suspension,' which means the police aren't coming for the next 365 days," said Wilson.

Factor in, too, the costs involved with the introduction of surcharge being levied for every dispatch to police.

## IN THE YARD

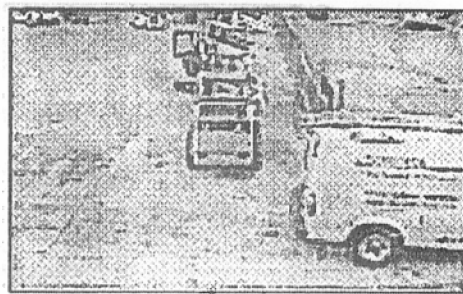
Securing an exterior compound is traditionally a difficult challenge.

Conventional security companies would traditionally try to detect intrusion using motion sensors and a gate contact, said Wilson.

What Sonitrol does is put out video equipment that watches key corridors of the yard. Remote video, combined with an access control gate and good lighting, proves both a good deterrent and a formidable detection device, said Wilson.

Should the system detect an intruder on your property, the incident is verified by a live, trained operator at Sonitrol's Canadian office in Mississauga, Ontario. The operator immediately passes that information along to local police dispatch, and can provide a running description of the occurrence virtually as it happens.

The video, also available in a high resolution format, provides actual snapshots of the offence taking place. Via fax, a copy of those shots can be at the police station by the time the officers bring in the suspect, further enhancing the possibility of a successful completion to the investigation.



*The Camera doesn't lie! Click, click, click, click goes the Sonitrol Security Systems' camera, and seconds later the photos of the getaway vehicle are on their way to the police station to assist police in solving this crime. Should Sonitrol's technology detect an intruder in your yard, the incident is verified by a live, trained operator at the Sonitrol monitoring station, and the crime-fighting wheels are put in motion.*

## INSIDE

Aesthetic, plastic-encased listening devices located strategically throughout the inside of your building contain a microphone which trips to any non-ambient sound 50 feet forward, 40 feet to either side and 30 feet backward, floor to ceiling.

When the audio is tripped - it could be from such things as smashing glass, footsteps or whispers - the signal comes to the monitoring station in three seconds.

"And we have 5.2 seconds of information ahead of the sound," said Wilson, "... so we actually are able to re-create the event, which is significant."

Should the operator determine the sound is non-threatening, he or she can reactivate the system from the monitoring station - without having to bother you or any of your employees at home in the middle of the night.

If something is up, the operator is immediately on the line to police dispatch.

The efficient Sonitrol

system is self-testing and tamper-proof, but it is its accuracy that makes it most credible. False alarms are running at about three per cent, compared to the 98-per cent rate of conventional systems, said Wilson.

## A BELIEVER

His mandate is to sell security services.

But it wasn't always that way for Joe Wilson. In fact, he was on the other side, trying to acquire the best protection possible as Director of Security for 460 Brewers Retail outlets throughout Ontario.

"About seven years ago, Sonitrol came to me and said, 'Joe, we can solve all your problems,'" he recalled. "And I said, 'Well, thank you very much. Everyone's solving my problems right now and it's costing me a lot of money.'"

However, prompted by Sonitrol President Dave Jones' goodwill gesture of a few free alarms, Wilson took up the opportunity, and

found success.

He put Sonitrol into a test market of 100 stores. The results were stunning.

Losses of about \$1.3 million annually - and that is restricted to related products alone - fell to \$37,000. Furthermore, there were very few false alarms and police suspensions, and suspects were being apprehended.

"So I became a convert."

Three years ago, he took up the opportunity to handle Canada for Sonitrol, where the approach is more as a security consultant than a salesperson.

"We didn't sell aluminum siding yesterday and decide this is a good thing to make money at," said Wilson.

"We actually tell people how to better protect themselves."

Located in France, Brazil, the United Kingdom and North America, Sonitrol is not only an agent of security, but a manufacturer of security equipment, sometimes even used by other companies in the field.

Sonitrol is owned by the London, England based Automatic Security Holdings, which also owns conventional security firms. There are 168 Sonitrol monitoring stations in North America, including the lone Canadian station in Mississauga, which monitors 1,000 customers in Ontario. That list, which includes more large heavy equipment dealers, is growing all the time, and has very little attrition, said Wilson.

The Canadian operation also has some British Columbia customers, for whom the actual monitoring is handled by Sonitrol stations in Washington state.

A manufacturer of access control technology, too, Sonitrol can efficiently integrate the systems.

"It's very important in compounds," said Wilson. "The gates open and close, and disarm the camera systems, so that we're only watching when we need to be watching."