

SHOP THEFT & SHOPLIFTING

Shop theft is a significant and on-going problem in our stores. It costs our company tens of thousands of dollars each year.

We need to prevent shoplifting before it happens. We ask all employees to be watchful & provide pro- active customer assistance as prevention.

- Pro-active customer service is the most effective deterrent to shop theft – approach, acknowledge & greet all customers & offer service.
- Be alert for customers creating a diversion or who are taking a significant amount of time in the store.
- Be aware of customers changing packaging or barcodes.
- Regularly re-approach customers who are “just browsing”.
- Take all items that are secured in locked cabinets or storerooms to the register – do not give it to the customer to take.
- Watch for customers taking stock into toilets.
- In the timber yards, dockets **MUST** be written for every customer & loads checked against the receipt.
- Check inside toolboxes, bins or any large items where stock can be concealed.
- Keep cash registers closed between transactions.
- All doors to storage, office & staff only areas are to be kept closed at all times.
- Alert your manager if you think there may be a potential shoplifter in the store.

Bag Inspections

You may request to look in a customer’s bag, however if they refuse, we have no legal right to go ahead. Customers should be asked politely if their bag can be inspected and if they query the request, tell them it is part of store policy.

Team members may look inside bags but must not touch the contents. If the inspection reveals store merchandise, ask the customer to pay for the goods & have a team member alert the Manager.

By making it standard practice to check bags and similar items in all circumstances, then no customer will feel victimised and it will be a real deterrent to anyone considering stealing from us.

What to do if you see someone shoplifting

If you see someone take an item, alert another employee so they can assist you and then either you or a team member should alert a Manager that there is a potential shoplifter & the Manager should respond immediately to that area. Approach the customer & offer customer assistance & do not imply they are shoplifting but continue to observe them until all items are paid for.

If a customer tries to leave the store with items that haven’t been paid for, ask the customer to return to the store with you & explain that you have a reason to believe they have merchandise in their possession which may not have been paid for.

Never accuse the person of shoplifting or stealing – give them the opportunity to pay for it or return it to your possession. If they refuse, make a mental note of their description & vehicle & make contact with the Police & notify the Operations Manager & General Manager.

When the Sensormatic door alarm sounds

If the door alarm sounds when a customer is exiting the store, politely ask the customer to come back into the store.

- Always let the customer walk back into the store in front of you. Do not take any bag or item from the customer at that stage but observe the customer carefully, particularly what they are doing with their hands.
- At this point, shoplifters often try to drop or hide an item, often in dump bins or into other stock displays. Watch carefully for this & pick up any items they may have dropped.
- If the person produces an item and offers to pay, do not accept that offer. Ask them to wait & call your Manager.
- If the person has purchased something, check the receipt matches the items they have.
- Always apologise to the customer if it is a false alarm through our failure to deactivate a tag.
- If it is not a failure to de-activate, it is quite likely the person has attempted to steal something.
- Once the Manager arrives, explain the situation then let them deal with the matter from there.
- If it is apparent that a theft has possibly taken place, it is important that there are witnesses to what has occurred.
- Use the P.A. system whenever needed to obtain additional assistance. By using **"Code 9"** the store Manager will recognise this code and assist.
- If the person does not stop & continues to walk/run, obtain as many details as possible, including the persons description, vehicle registration & make/model.

In the instance where a shoplifter has stolen from us, the Police will need to be contacted. This should be done by the Manager on duty & an incident report should be filled out with as much detail as possible by all team members involved.

Always avoid situations with the potential of violence. Never try to search the shoplifter or try to force them to accompany you. Whenever violence seems like a possibility, back off immediately. Remember, customers (including shoplifters) have rights.