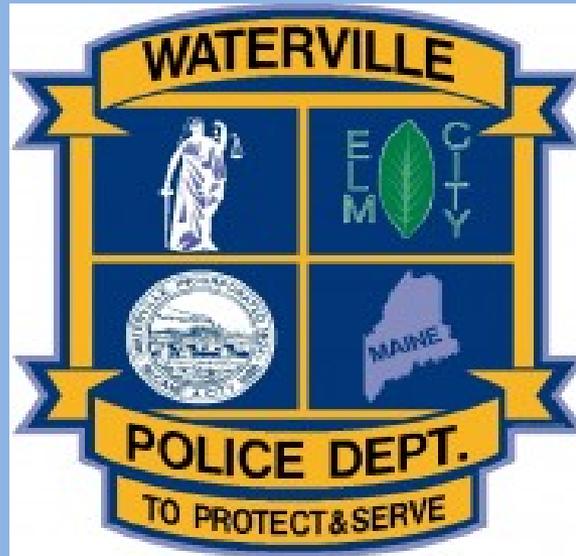


Guidelines for Addressing Pharmacy Robbery



September 22, 2013
Waterbury City Council Chambers
Chief Joseph Massey

Disclaimer

- **These recommendations are based on investigative information of past pharmacy robberies and common sense principles and as such are a collection of suggestions for consideration rather than prescriptive rules**
- **Safety should remain the focus and priority at all times**
- **There are no guaranteed responses from either a prevention perspective or with respect to policy/procedure that will inoculate any individual pharmacy from the risk of robbery.**

Introduction

It is the goal of the Waterville Police Department to

- Heighten the awareness of pharmacy robberies with local law enforcement**
- Provide guidelines for pharmacy robbery prevention**
- Provide procedures/policy to be implemented in the event of a robbery**
- Provide procedures/policy to be implemented in the aftermath of a robbery**

**Motivations for Robbery and
Complexities Associated with
Implementing these
Recommendations**

Motivations

In recent trends in pharmacy robberies in the greater Waterville area and Maine suggest that the main motivating factor is narcotics with an emphasis on OxyContin and Oxycodone

Implementation Complexities

In seeking to implement these recommendations it is crucial to acknowledge the variations between pharmacies

Some examples of relevant differences include the:

- Size of the staff group
- Business focus
- Range of products for sale
- Range of services offered onsite
- Physical size of the pharmacy

What to do *BEFORE* a Robbery

There are two basic underlying goals to any strategies that are implemented before a robbery has occurred

- Increase the perceived risk and effort, reduce reward of committing a burglary at the specific location
- Increase likelihood of offender apprehension should a robbery occur

Manipulating the Risk, Reward, and Effort

It is important to understand that there is variation in risk between locations, with some controllable factors likely to influence the risk of any individual pharmacy

For example, it may be possible to do any/all of the following:

- Ensure lighting levels are sufficient, both inside and outside the premises
- Ensure adequate staffing levels are onsite at all times
- Explore the possibility of installing a *silent* panic alarm
- Limit the wearing of disguising clothing from being worn inside the shop

Manipulating the Risk, Reward, and Effort

Place an emphasis on staff training, both from a preventive perspective and also in the event of a robbery should one occur

- **Mandatory training for new staff**
- **Ongoing scenario-based training**
- **An iterative approach to security**
- **Remain vigilant for signs of 'casing'**
- **Develop a positive working relationship with the local police**

Specific to Narcotics

There are also a range of strategies that could be implemented that are specific to controlling the risk presented by high-value narcotics

These include:

- Make conscious decisions regarding the volume of narcotics that are kept onsite
- Design the lay-out of the pharmacy to reduce the isolation of points of sale and the points at which the narcotics are stored
- Consider the use of safes and/or secure locked locations for storing narcotics
- Have a standard policy for dealing with new prescriptions for narcotics, 'fishing' calls regarding onsite stock levels, etc.

Maximizing the Chance of an Apprehension

There are a range of strategies that could be implemented to maximize the likelihood of the police being able to apprehend a perpetrator in the event of a robbery occurring

These include

- The implementation of security surveillance system
- Installation of height markers on exit doors to assist with identification at a later date
- New technology (GPS tracking in prescription bottles)

What to do *DURING* a Robbery

Should a robbery occur the fundamental objectives should be to minimize dangers and maximize safety for staff and customers

The best practice approach to achieving these aims is to be methodical, try to remain calm, and to follow these rules:

- Do *not* be a hero
- Comply: do as you are told – nothing more and nothing less
- Utilize non-threatening body language
- Attempt to remember as much as possible about the offender(s)
- Stay out of danger if you are not directly involved
- Ensure that the offender's escape route remains clear
- Hostage situation

What to do *AFTER* a Robbery

Immediately following robbery the following strategies should be implemented

- If the police have not already been alerted by a silent alarm, call the police as soon as it is safe to do so**
- Make a note of how the perpetrator exits the area**
- Immediately close the business**
- Remember that, after a robbery, the pharmacy has become a crime scene**
- Once police arrive, give full statements and comply with their requests**

From a longer-term perspective, following a robbery incident at a pharmacy it is important to

- Attempt to prevent repeat victimization**
- Ensure that all the victims take advantage of victim support services that are available**

Shoppers' Cop

Medication Take Back Initiative

Medication Deposit Box – Police Dept. Lobby

Ongoing Scenario-based Training

Proactive Approach to Reduce Robbery Risk

Work With Local Law Enforcement Agencies

QUESTIONS?