

NEW ENGLAND REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

SAFETY & SECURITY



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SECURITY WINDOW FILMS...
*Minimize injuries, property damage
and loss of business continuity.*

Consider this...the windows in your building are shattered. Terrorism, vandalism, severe weather, smash-and-grab crime and blasts can result in shattered windows. How much of an impact will the inability to gain access to your premises have on your revenue? Have you considered how injuries resulting from flying shards of glass will effect your business? Could you estimate the cost of repairs for damaged property if the interior of your building remained exposed to inclement weather?

Building owners and managers are purchasing security window film for perimeter windows to mitigate the destructive affects of vandalism and catastrophic events and their associated impact on business continuity. A window treated with security film can break upon impact. However, window film will help hold broken glass in place -- reducing the potential for personal injuries, damage to property and loss of revenue.

Can you afford the installation of window film? Most likely. Compared to the expense of glass replacement, a security window film retrofit is an affordable option for improved safety. Repercussions of NOT installing security window film can be costly. Revenue loss due to production stoppage and the delayed return of employees, customers and occupants warrant the investment. Costs related to personal injuries and repairs to damaged property surely justify the purchase. An installation of safety window film increases the probability of a rapid return to business-as-usual.

Will you see a return on investment? Yes. Due to its insulating nature, window film offers the added benefit of reduced heating, cooling and HVAC maintenance expenses. Managers easily justify their investment on future energy cost savings. Using monitoring equipment, trained window film technicians can accurately record differences in temperatures inside filmed and unfilmed adjacent windows. The rate of return depends upon the type of window (clear, tinted, insulated, single or double pane) and the specific window film chosen.

Will the installation of security window film have a major impact on the flow of business? No. Installation is quick and clean. Most security films are applied to the inside of windows. The glass is thoroughly cleaned, sprayed with a slip solution for proper positioning, and the film is applied. Removing excess water, trimming, and drying the edges complete the application. Efficient, professionally trained installers provide minimal interruption to production activities.

There are different installation systems for security window films. 3M Company offers the Ultraflex Sealant System, a strong safety and security installation system. It combines the strength and elasticity of 3M Scotchshield™ Safety and Security Window Film with Dow Corning™ 995 Silicone Structural Sealant. The combination creates a flexible membrane that captures and absorbs impact energy allowing the frame to bend and twist to accommodate a variety of impact stresses. It is a cost-effective system when compared to more bulky mechanical attachment alternatives.

When you decide to invest in security film, consider only skilled and experienced installers. Verify that you are working with a manufacturer's authorized dealer. An authorized dealer will be happy to have you check with their distributor or manufacturer for confirmation of their status as a dealer. An installation by a manufacturer's authorized dealer that employs professionally trained installers will assure quality work and the security of a manufacturer's warranty.

Note the number of years the manufacturer has been in the business of window film, whether it is an ISO 9002 certified facility, and whether it is committed to an investment in research and development.

A manufacturer that uses its own adhesives is a real plus. Window film is only as good as its adhesive. A bad adhesive will produce bubbling and blistering -- distortions created from thermal cycling that can result in seal failures. You will want to be assured of lifelong optical clarity, a characteristic of a good adhesive.

Does the film incorporate micro-layered polyester technology for optimum strength? Find out specifics on blast testing on the brand of security film you are considering. Were the tests conducted according to GSA criteria? Be certain that the test data is indicative of consistent performance in all climates and conditions. Naturally, the more film applied in the field, the more reliable the data for performance.

Picture this: an equivalent of 500 pounds of TNT is detonated 121 feet from a window of a test structure. The glass shatters sending shards that embed its inside walls. The videotape of the blast is impressive. But what is not shown is disturbing. The reality of a blast is that few glass shards will reach the wall at the far end of any room. People interrupt them. The same blast is repeated on the same window type with 3M security film applied. The result: the film completely retains the glass inside the frame. No glass shards land inside the structure. This blast test took place at the Kirtland Airforce Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Per GSA standards, Applied Research Associates, Inc. conducted several tests in response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and various terrorist attacks on U.S. troops, and to measure the potential hazard mitigation characteristics of 3M window films.

In troubling times, I'm reassured to know that there are products on the market manufactured to minimize injuries, property damage and loss of business continuity. Security window film is a product that helps us work smarter not harder in the aftermath of catastrophic events, allowing us to pick ourselves up quicker, dust ourselves off faster and start all over again sooner.

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