

Help mitigate injuries and property damage with safety window film



Peter Davey, American Window Film, Inc.

Reports of fatalities, injuries and property damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Sandy Hook, and the Boston Marathon Bombing are disheartening evidence that New England is not immune to violent weather patterns or terrorism. Although we may not be given enough warning to prepare for imminent catastrophe, we can immediately put into effect safety measures to mitigate associated injuries and damages. Mitigation happens now to reduce consequences later.

Safety window films help mitigate injuries and damage caused by catastrophic events. They help hold glass in place in the event of breakage. Business owners and facilities managers are securing their properties in an effort to minimize potential injuries, damages and loss of business continuity resulting from violent weather, terrorist attacks and vandalism. All too common are the secondary effects of blasts and violent weather - including injuries sustained from flying glass, walking on glass shards and the loss of business-as-usual due to property exposure to the elements.

3M Company began the history of window film in 1961 with their patent application and subsequent patent grant for a metalized solar control window film. Responding to demand, 3M developed security films to address international concerns regarding terrorist activity including less publicized, yet highly destructive, vandalism.

Shatter-resistant window films are a low profile, high performance measure of security. A premium film will conform to ANSI and CPS glazing standards and will have been subjected to rigorous GSA blast testing or other credible, independent glazing standards and blast testing procedures. 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 delayed return of employees, customers and occupants warrant the investment. An installation of safety window film increases the probability of a rapid return to business.

Along with responding to terrorist activity and changing weather patterns with security film installations, property owners and managers are answering consumer demands to improve building energy efficiency through the application of quality solar control window films. An application of insulating, Low-E window films conserve energy and reduce heat gain and loss through windows all year long - substantially reducing HVAC expense. Featuring Wavelength-Selective metals which block more of the solar spectrum than conventional metals, many Low-E window films can reduce AC costs by blocking up to 73% of the sun's heat in warmer months. In colder months, they reduce heat loss by up to 30%. Many window films meet LEED Energy and Atmosphere Prerequisites and qualify for LEED credits. Qualifying categories for credits include "Optimize Energy Performance," "Indoor Environmental Quality" and "Daylight and Views" among others.

We know there is no magic wand we can wave to eliminate catastrophic events. However, we can initiate steps immediately to mitigate damage and injuries that can result from these events. Shatter-resistant window films are one economical, effective and immediate security measure that should be moved up on all our priority lists.

Peter Davey is president of American Window Film, Foxboro, Mass.



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American Window Film, Inc.

21 Cocasset Street
Foxboro, MA 02035

800-274-8468

www.americanwindowfilm.com
pjd@americanwindowfilm.com