

Physical Home Security

By David Martinek

Some say that adequate home security depends mostly upon the honesty of the burglar. In Teller County, Colorado, where there are a high percentage of vacation and second homes with non-resident owners, physical home security is an important issue.

Physical home security describes the measures taken to prevent or deter access to the home by thieves, vandals or unauthorized persons (i.e., “intruders”). It can be as simple as a locked door or as elaborate as multiple layers of technology and surveillance.

Typically, the following elements are integrated, in some form, into most common home security systems: a) obstacles or warnings to frustrate trivial intruders and delay the serious ones; b) alarms, lighting schemes or surveillance cameras to make it likely that intruders will be noticed; and c) security response resources to repel, catch or frustrate intruders when entry into the home is detected.

In a well designed system, these features must complement each other to be effective. The goal of the security system is to convince potential intruders that the likely cost of home invasion exceeds the value of making it. There are at least four layers of physical security that are possible.

The initial layer uses Environmental Design to deter treats. Some of the more common items are a fence, warning signs or lighting around the home.

The next layer employs Mechanical or Electrical Obstacles and includes gates, doors and locks and sometimes electronic access control.

The third layer is Intrusion Detection, what most people would call an “alarm system.” Intrusion systems are more of a response measure than a preventative tool, although some would argue that they are also a deterrent. Such systems employ a variety of technologies, including audio and electronic detection sensors, horns and sirens and automatic notification devices to signal a central monitoring agency. Sometimes, these systems have a high incidence of false alarms. Thankfully, the Teller County Sheriff’s office is pretty good at responding to burglar alarms

The last layer is Video Surveillance. Like intrusion detection, these systems are not much of a deterrent, but they are useful for noticing intruders, for incident verification and historical analysis. The technology today allows home owners to not only have surveillance cameras in place to take and record pictures whenever an incident is detected, but to also be able to monitor in real-time the disposition of their property remotely using their computer and an internet connection.

This Realtor can recommend several home security companies, including some who specialize in fully integrated systems using all four layers of physical security. One such company, for example, is 1st Installation & Service Technologies, a nationwide company specializing in a single-source solution for the hospitality and retail industries. They are able to adapt their commercial designs to provide a very robust home system. For more information, inquire at the following email address: jeff.wells@ist4pos.com.

For peace of mind and to protect vacation homes and property, a good physical home security system is recommended.