

# Safeguarding Against Vandalism



*It would never be appropriate to compare golf course vandalism to terrorism. However, when we discover car tire ruts on our greens; flagpoles, benches or ball-washers swimming in our ponds; or graffiti of any kind on buildings, how exactly do we feel?*

*Here are some strategies we can implement to prevent vandalism at our golf courses.*

On a recent Tuesday morning, as I drove my golf course I came upon my 8th green, which sits high atop a hill and in plain view of homes bordering the course. During the night this green had gasoline poured on it, the golf cup hole filled with fuel and the entire works set on fire! No matter how many times in our careers this happens, we still have the same feelings of internal rage, sadness, frustration and a whole list of other unprintable emotions.

This leads to the question of how we can prevent such thoughtless acts from happening. I have compiled a list of many simple and not-so-simple potential deterrents so you may leave your facility at the end of the day without vandalism being among your worries.

## **Lighting**

Have your shop facility well-lit all the way around. Where possible, use motion-detector lights. Most of the newer irrigation system satellites have switch programs that can turn off or on just like an irrigation sprinkler station. Take advantage of these options available to you.

## **Fencing**

Is the entire perimeter of your golf course fenced in? If it is not and if it is possible to do so, by all means fence it in. Some villages may have ordinances restricting the type of fence you install. An electronic gate is advised for in front of the main entrance. On the outside frame of shop windows, you can install galvanized wire-mesh window coverings. Not only will they deter vandals, but they also deflect golf balls that might otherwise shatter glass.

## **Video Cameras**

Strategically mounted video cameras can do wonders to deter vandals. Linked to a recorder inside, they will monitor and record all activity and provide timed and dated material for future reference if needed. You might even

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use dummy cameras plugged into nothing; if the individuals wishing to do harm to your facility see them, they will often change their minds about destruction.

### Security Systems

My shop has a security system that monitors in many ways. It has contact points on all doors and windows so if one is broken, the alarm immediately goes off and sends a loud message that states, "Step away, you have violated security, the police are on their way." I also have voice-activated microphones that are directly linked to the security monitoring center; they record all voice activity. Most importantly, the signals for my security system are wireless, so phone lines being cut will not disrupt security service.

### Dogs

There is nothing as simple and sometimes more effective than a loud barking dog. If you have a dog at your shop that chases geese during the day and is a light sleeper at night, what a great combination!

These are just a few potential deterrents; I'm sure there are more. If just one method or one trick makes the difference between vandalism, theft or any sort of wrongdoing, it's worth pursuing. Whatever preventative maintenance measures are available to you, investigate them and implement their use. Hopefully your plan will better safeguard you against vandalism and that gut-wrenching feeling we get when it occurs.



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