

A SILENT EMPLOYEE - MOST OF THE TIME

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I have been thinking of writing this article ever since Fred Anderson wrote about his maintenance building security system at Purple Hawk Golf Club. Fred had the luxury of connecting his alarm directly to the local law enforcement center, however, in Owatonna, local ordinances do not allow direct connection.

My maintenance building for those of you who are not familiar with it is a 24' x 50' building with one service door, two overhead garage doors, and two easy to break windows which provide access for intruders. At least once each year from 1975 until 1987 our shop was forcibly entered. Entry was gained either by breaking one of the windows or by kicking in the wooden service door which finally had to be replaced with a steel door. We installed our security system the same time the new steel service door was installed. Our system consists of one infrared motion detector located between the two windows and a magnetic switch located on the service door. The motion detector will detect any movement through the first room on into the second main room. The motion detector and magnetic switch are hard wired to a main control panel, then on to the Sensa-phone or dialer. As I mentioned earlier, we cannot connect directly to our local law enforcement center. We can by programming the dialer with simple touch pads have the system call my home phone first, then my mechanic's, then my assistant's phone. We picked this order simply because of proximity to our maintenance building. When anything sets off the motion detector the dialer begins dialing my home number within thirty seconds. As soon as I pick up the receiver a recorded message is announced to me telling me a "Code 1" or entry has been gained. I then have the ability to listen back to my shop via a speaker microphone on the dialer to determine if there is someone moving around or possibly a false alarm has occurred. The feature is nice because many times no noise can be heard, but I know from experience small chipmunks have gained access occasionally and set off the alarm. If no one is at my residence to answer the message the dialer goes to the second phone number or third until the "Code 1" message has been received and acknowledged.

Now comes the tricky part. After receiving the message and listening back to the shop, I still have to decide by the time of the alarm or if I heard noises inside the shop or not whether to call the police dispatcher and have an officer meet me at the shop. Many times my decision to have the police come out has resulted in false alarms and

me losing about two hours sleep that night. The few times that our system has notified me of a break-in our response time has not been fast enough to catch the guilty party. As in most cases, the location of our maintenance buildings give criminals fast undetected getaways. I feel the reason we have been unable to apprehend anyone is because my shop is so small that the thieves can find our snack tray or pop machine money very quickly and leave before the police can arrive at the scene.

I do like my silent employee anyway because there is also other standard features on the Sensa-phone which have paid for the system many times over. A temperature sensing device which constantly monitors the temperature around the dialer is a standard feature. Initial programming I can set a high temperature limit and a low temperature limit which if either one is reached will trigger the dialer to call and notify me that a "Code 2" or temperature limit has been reached. I received this message of both temperature imbalances over the last two years. Our shop furnace thermostat stuck on one night and brought the shop temperature to the upper 100 degree limit. This happened in January and my shop felt like a very dry sauna. The other incident happened on Christmas Eve last year when the furnace pilots failed to stay lit and the shop temperature dropped to the lower 40 degree limit. As you can see my temperature ranges were extremely far apart, but the system notified me of both irregularities. Any temperature range can be programmed into the unit which may prevent costly chemicals from freezing, as in my case, or it may prevent a worse disaster like a fire. A smoke detector can be wired to the unit or may be positioned close to the dialer which by a high sound level alone will also set off the alarm.

Sensa-phone will also notify me if its batteries are low. Batteries are needed in case of a power failure which Sensa-phone will continue operating on for 15 hours before notifying me that its batteries are low. Sensa-phone will also wait 5 minutes after a power failure has occurred before notifying me that a power failure exists. One other standard feature which some of you have experienced is the ability to check on shop conditions from another location. By programming into the dialer an arbitrary number of rings I can call my shop number, even from long distance, let the phone ring that same number of programmed rings, then listen to a recorded synthesizer tell me the time, temperature, battery condition, alert condition status, and I also have the ability to again listen into my shop for fifteen seconds.

All these features are standard on my security system which was installed by a local locksmith. The dialer is called a Sensa-phone, the motion detector has a range of about 35 feet, and the total system installed cost \$500. If you have costly chemicals which must be kept above

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MTI Distribution Company has announced new high performance enhancement for its Reelmaster 216 triplex mower. It now features 3 wheel drive and 11 blade cutting units in addition to its lightweight design and wide tires.

The 3 wheel drive feature allows for greater traction and speed of mowing, and a 3 wheel drive kit is available for earlier models.

"Our customers asked for enhanced hill climbing and more maneuverability," said Bill Koenig, Marketing Manager of Toro's Commercial Division. "The Reelmaster 216 has the power for hill climbing and superior quality of cut. The machine is balanced, with the engine positioned over the front traction wheels, allowing for responsive handling when trimming or cross-cutting."

In addition, the Reelmaster 216 allows for the choice of 5, 8 or 11 bladed reels, giving it increased flexibility as well as maximum quality of cut.

The weight of each cutting unit is balanced so they follow ground contours evenly at any speed.

Grass collection has been simplified on the 216, so the

operator does not need to attach additional parts to change from front collection to rear dispersion. The procedure is completed with a shield adjustment.

Improved ease of operation is another customer request built in the Reelmaster 216. One lever controls the cutting reels, and forward, reverse and braking action are all controlled by a foot pedal.

The 216's lightweight design and wide tires are a departure from other mowers and address another customer concern by reducing compaction.

Contact MTI for more information.

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freezing or if you would like the peace of mind that fire could possibly be averted, or maybe break-ins are contributing to your lack of sleep as well as work worries, I would recommend installing a security system for your establishment. Just make sure you are the one getting up at night to answer the alarm and not your wife.

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