



Clear Zone

Community Safety Program



Clear Zone – Community Safety Program

Window signage has historically been an issue in the convenience store industry with it being identified as a causal factor for robberies in numerous studies (such as Crow and Bull 1975; Athena Research Corporation 1986; and Justice Research and Statistics Association 1997).

Regulatory agencies such as [OSHA](#) and the [Ministry of Labour Boards](#) have also identified clear site lines as a recommended safety practice; with many municipalities also implementing city ordinance by-laws to restrict retailers on window clutter to ensure clear site lines are maintained to the pay-point area.

The *Clear Zone Program* is a robbery prevention initiative designed to reduce offender behaviors, reduce the incidents of robberies, increase the sense of security among users of our retail business, and increase the level of knowledge in crime reduction strategies. Clear Zone was formulated in partnership with Peel Regional Police based on researched Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, environmental and situational criminology, and paired with Crime Prevention Through Community Engagement (CPTCE).

The Clear Zone program is intended to strip away the offenders' anonymity through strategic placement accomplished by identifying a prominent window that overlooks the cash handling area and ensures promotional materials do not obstruct the view into and out of the store. With the majority of transactions, including robberies, taking place at the sales counter removing signs from the window eliminates the cover it provides for an offender.

The prominent window is then highlighted and defined through the application of the red Clear Zone decals that borders the window. The decals provide a constant reminder for employees to always keep the area clear and acts as a visual deterrent by fostering a sense of police presence and community engagement through the Crime Stoppers logo with the reflective words "Community Safety First" printed on the decal. The existence of the decal is further intended to draw and capture witness potential by getting people both inside and outside of the store to pay attention to the Clear Zone area.

Ultimately, the program strives to deter offenders from targeting the store location altogether because of the inherent risks of getting caught are perceived to be higher.

The Clear Zone Program was created in partnership with the Peel Regional Police in 2014, with Circle K Central Canada implementing the Clear Zone program into all locations in the Region of Peel. Since installation, combined incidents of robbery at these locations has decreased by 18% to date.

With the Clear Zone program's success in the Region of Peel, the program was re-branded "Clear Zone – Community Safety First" bearing the Canadian Crime Stoppers Logo. The decals were then implemented into four "high risk" store locations with a history of robberies in Thunder Bay, Ottawa, and Toronto in January 2015. Since installation, combined incidents of robbery at these locations has decreased by 92% to date.

With continued success Central Canada rolled out a second set of installations into four additional "high risk" locations with a history of robberies in May 2017. Since installation, combined incidents of robbery at these locations has decreased by 100% to date.

The Clear Zone Program is currently being studied by the University of Toronto, who have also provided funding for the decals.





Example of Decal



Example of Clear Zone Installed

Before



After



CBC News Report: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/convenience-peelregion-clear-zone-1.4899996>

