



# Rural Crime Prevention Advice

## Equipment and Tool Security

Equipment and tool security can be a particular issue for rural businesses and farms.

To keep your belongings safe:

- lock equipment away in a secure building or part of a building when not in use
- invest in a secure storage toolbox
- install a burglar alarm on buildings where equipment is kept
- always lock vehicles when left outside and keep the keys in your possession
- keep expensive items and vehicles out of sight when not in use
- consider using hitch locks, wheel clamps or ground anchors
- mark your tools and equipment and register them
- keep a record of all valuable items
- consider fitting outside security lights

## Estate and Building Security

A good standard of building security is very important in rural areas, especially for outbuildings that may not be visited for weeks at a time.

Farmhouses and other rural properties are the same as any other home, so general home security advice still applies. However, because of the remote location, additional security measures may be beneficial.

### ***To protect your rural home or business:***

- keep the boundaries of your land and property well-maintained and secure
- keep all doors and windows shut and locked when not in use
- install a visible burglar alarm
- make sure windows and door frames are secure and in good repair
- fit strong locks to sheds, garages and outbuildings
- fit good quality window locks
- consider security bars and grilles for vulnerable windows and openings
- make sure gates cannot be lifted off or have their fixing bolts removed
- check security equipment regularly to ensure it works properly
- use locking posts or temporary obstructions to control wide access points to yards



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## ***For additional security you could also:***

- install automatic security lights that come on at dusk and turn off at dawn
- install CCTV cameras to watch over the most vulnerable areas of the property
- install a monitored intruder alarm system
- install an entry control system infrared, intercom or keypad
- establish a single gated entrance and exit, removing all private access points that are not in use

## **Boundaries**

Take a good look around your property boundary for any potential places where it could be made more secure.

### ***Consider:***

- planting thorny hedging to act as a natural barrier
- digging deep ditches to control and deter unwanted vehicle access
- if possible, having a single-gated access point to the property
- using locking posts or temporary obstructions to control large openings
- invert and cap gate hinges
- making sure fixing bolts are secure and use covered padlocks
- installing warning signs

## **Electric Fences**

Electric fences can be an easy target for thieves as they're often in remote locations away from the farm or stable.

Thieves steal them for scrap value, or offer them on second-hand markets without operating instructions.

### ***To protect your fence and energiser, you could:***

- visibly mark your equipment in a number of places as a deterrent, reducing its value and making it harder to sell on if stolen
- photograph the unit and record the make, model and serial number, to help the police if it's stolen
- attach your energiser to a sturdy fixed point or secure it in a purpose-made storage container
- hide or camouflage your energiser behind a fence or tree, in a hedge or in undergrowth
- attach a small tracker to the energiser
- cover the power light with tape

Stolen energisers are often sold on without instructions or packaging. If you see an item like this, and you're suspicious about how it's become available, please report it.



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## Diesel Theft

Diesel theft is a problem for many farms and rural properties. Fuel tanks stored in rural and isolated locations are very attractive to thieves looking for an easy target.

- keep tanks stored close to the property where you can see them. If this isn't possible, you should consider installing CCTV to watch over isolated tanks and restrict access with walls, fences and hedges. Security lighting or motion detection lighting can also be an effective deterrent to thieves
- remember to check the oil level in your tank regularly. Look for any spilt fuel, marks on the locks or anything else suspicious
- avoid installing a storage tank in an isolated area or outlying building
- consider using a mobile bowser (tanker) kept in a secure place when not in use

## Livestock Theft

You should check your livestock and the security of boundary fencing regularly. If they're making more noise than usual this could mean something has disturbed them.

- make regular checks of the fields where animals are kept to check that fences haven't been breached and that no one else is in the field with them
- use ear tags, horn brands, freeze marking or tattooing to make your animals more easily identifiable
- keep your hedges, fences and gates in good repair: field gate hinges should have capping hinges so they can't be removed easily; cattle grids should be removable and locked out of position when they're not in use; use locking posts to obstruct large openings to yards
- consider installing CCTV

Always report any suspicious activity involving livestock to the police.

## Tack Security

- secure tack room windows on the inside with solid iron bars (not tubular steel)
- secure all doors with good quality locks; use bolts (not screws) on the hinges
- mark your tack using an ultraviolet pen
- display warning signage to deter thieves
- padlock gates with substantial padlocks and heavy duty chains
- reverse top hinges on gates to prevent lifting
- install security lights and an intruder alarm

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