

## MALL SECURITY

### Expert Investigates Assault in Mall Parking Lot

A teen was assaulted in a mall parking lot after leaving a late night movie with friends, and sustained head and face injuries. As the boys were crossing the mall parking lot, they were assaulted by men that exited from a van. Premises security expert, Donald J. Decker, CPP, CPM, was retained to determine if the shopping mall, the contracted security vendor, and the movie theater violated the standard of care for security at a shopping mall and created a dangerous condition that caused this incident.

Security at the mall was contracted through an outside vendor. Security patrols were conducted on foot and by vehicle. There were no security signs or CCTV cameras in the parking lot. The lighting was reduced in the area of the parking lot where the assault occurred.

Procedures for tenants to request extended security hours were defined by the mall at quarterly tenant meetings. The mall required that the movie theater provide notice when they would be open late; however, the movie theater did not attend these meetings, and did not notify the mall or security vendor of the need for extended security hours. Proper security procedures on the night of the assault required the movie theater to notify the mall and the security vendors of their extended hours, resulting in an additional security officer on duty.

The mall relied on the security vendor to provide reasonable security, but did not conduct a security survey to assess the adequacy of security measures at the mall, leaving the security vendor to assess the performance of their staff and overall security. Had the mall properly monitored the security vendor and performed a security survey, the inadequate security measures would have been identified and reasonable security measures would have been implemented.

Citing industry standards, Mr. Decker effectively demonstrated that the mall, the contracted security vendor, and the movie theater violated the standard of care for security at a shopping mall.

This matter settled favorably for our client prior to trial.

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