



**Homeland  
Security**

# Physical Security Measures for Levees

There are no industry standards for the physical security of levees, and the level of physical security is the province of individual levee owners and operators. When choosing security measures, please consider the following factors:

- **A prior history** of thefts, vandalism, or other security-related problems either directed against the levee itself or the surrounding area
- **Threats directed against the levee** or staff who operate it
- **The potential consequences of levee failure** or the malfunctioning of critical control devices that may be damaged through theft or other deliberate acts
- **The need to mitigate liability issues** resulting from potential deliberate acts
- **Visibility and public access** to the levee
- **Whether temporary protective measures, such as additional access restrictions or increased patrols, are needed** at critical locations during periods of greatest vulnerability and consequences (e.g., high water conditions)

The best source for determining the appropriate level of security is the owner/operator's knowledge of the levee's history and a common sense assessment of what measures are appropriate, if any. Seek input from the local law enforcement agency. Other local levee owners and operators may also have suggestions for security measures that they have used.

## Types of Security Measures

The following is a description of the types of measures that could be employed:

- Installing fencing, gates, or other barriers to restrict access to the levee or support facilities
- Limiting access to critical facilities or features to authorized persons through such measures as unique or restricted keying systems, remote "smart locks," or access card systems
- Instructing maintenance staff to be alert for cuts in fencing, broken locks, or other irregularities
- Posting signs in non-public areas to warn individuals that they are trespassing
  - The local law enforcement agency can advise as to the language and posting requirements.
- Marking tools and maintaining an accurate inventory of generators, power tools, and other valuable equipment, which will aid in their recovery if stolen
- Ensuring that metal products such as copper or aluminum are secured at night and marked to help identify them if stolen
  - A unique color spray paint and marking or branding wire reels may help.
- Implementing access control measures to identify and process all personnel, visitors, vehicles, vendors, and contractors

- For example, all personnel display photo IDs, uniforms, marked vehicles, visitor passes, and/or contractor IDs while in critical buildings or areas.
- Installing door alarms or other systems to monitor entry into critical buildings or areas
- Implementing recorded closed-circuit television systems (CCTV) that provide surveillance capability of a protected facility
- Integrating alarm, CCTV, and other security systems that report to a staffed levee facility or a contract alarm station for incident assessment and that dispatch the appropriate company or law enforcement personnel as needed
- Placing barriers to delay or stop vehicles, particularly in vital areas where only authorized vehicles should be allowed
- Lighting critical areas to deter trespassing and to facilitate observation at night
  - An alternative is to have motion-detection lighting in place.
- Establishing a contract with a reputable security vendor who can provide either random patrols or more stringent onsite security when circumstances require such actions
- Creating a security awareness program to advise neighbors and employees of the types of problems happening and how to report suspicious activities.
  - The local law enforcement agency should be able to assist in this.
- Asking the local law enforcement agency to assess the security of the levee and its facilities, particularly in response to local crime patterns.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive but offers security measures that could provide an adequate level of security for levees.

## Contact Information

For questions or more information, please contact [dams@dhs.gov](mailto:dams@dhs.gov).



Source: DHS