

GUARDSMARK

PROTECTING HVAC SYSTEMS

Because of the apparently increasing incidence of anthrax cases, it is vital that our customers establish and maintain a high level of awareness of their vulnerabilities, specifically in their building HVAC systems. Harmful agents introduced in to these systems can rapidly spread throughout the structure and infect all persons exposed to the circulated air.

Below are a series of guidelines that we believe are necessary to enhance security in this critical aspect of facility operations:

- ♣ Restrict access to main air intake points to persons who have a work-related reason to be there
- ♣ Maintain access rosters of pre-approved maintenance personnel authorized to work on the system
- ♣ Ensure that all contractors who have access to the system have received personnel background screening from their employers
- ♣ Escort all contractors with access to the system while on site
- ♣ Ensure that all air intake points are adequately secured with locking devices
- ♣ Place alarms on all access points to the system
- ♣ Post a security officer next to the system to provide access control
- ♣ Monitor the area with CCTV

All buildings have air intake points that either are roof-mounted, exterior wall-mounted or in a free standing unit on the ground outside of the building. Due to "sick building syndrome," four years ago the federal government enacted legislation requiring all new buildings to mix a certain percentage of fresh air in with recirculated air in the HVAC system. The volume of fresh air taken in is based on the square footage of the building and the number of employees working.

One method of reducing the risk of biological agents circulating throughout a building is installation of ultra-violet light filters in the HVAC system's supply and return ducts. These fluorescent light tubes have a life span of approximately one-year of continuous use.

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