



## **IFMA'S VIOLENCE SURVEY SHOWS INCREASE IN WORKPLACE SECURITY MEASURES**

Incidents like the December 26, 2000 slaying of seven workers in a Wakefield, Massachusetts technology company are sounding an alarm for facility professionals, human resource managers and security personnel as their companies take steps to prevent workplace violence with increased security.

The Corporate Facility Monitor survey conducted in January by the International Facility Management Association among a sample of its members shows more than 88 percent consider security a high priority, and 75 percent report an increase in security measures in the past 12 months.

Violent and criminal acts that respondents reported in that time period were: major thefts (57.4 percent); verbal threats among employees (27.1 percent); threatening phone calls (24.9 percent); destruction of company property (22 percent); verbal threats from employees to management (15.3 percent); bomb threats (14.6 percent); fights (10.6 percent); domestic violence occurring at work (6 percent); weapons brought to work (4.9 percent); and sexual assault (1.7 percent). (Hostage situations, actual or attempted bombings, and actual or attempted murders occurred in less than 1 percent of facilities reporting.)

The survey also indicated that the size of the workforce population directly impacts the number of reported incidents, thereby driving larger companies to tighten security in the last year. Facilities characterized as "open to the public" were also more likely to increase security.

Downsizing, layoffs, outsourcing, restructuring, striking workers, replacing permanent workers with temporaries and other incidents of workplace violence reported by the media were cited as circumstances that would drive companies to increase security, with response rates for likelihood ranging from 41 to 66 percent. An economic downturn was not at all likely to prompt tighter security, almost 70 percent said.

In facilities managed by survey respondents: 91.9 percent use controlled building access; 60 percent have a security guard at the facility's entrance; 63 percent employ a security patrol; and 67.7 percent use closed-circuit television. The Corporate Facility Monitor survey on workplace violence was sent electronically to more than 3,000 IFMA members and garnered a response rate of 28 percent.