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## **FENG SHUI & SECURITY**

### **“Does one complement the other?”**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

It will do us good to consider the ancient art of Feng Shui in the context of modern realities where change is relatively constant and stress is accepted as a way of life. Apart from the daily grind of work related malaise, we have to put up with the malady of rising crime in our midst, be it at office or at home, day or night. What can we do to protect ourselves and our loved ones? Criminals are getting more sophisticated in keeping up with technological change and outrageously bold. They will resort to all kind of tactics and ingenuities to break into our homes and offices when opportunity presented itself. Based on crime surveys, most burglaries or theft are crimes of opportunity due to negligence or ignorance on the part of the victim such as leaving an opened window, an unlocked door, a lackadaisical regard for security etc.

What has all these got to do with Feng Shui you may ask?

Well, the principles of Feng Shui have its relevancy in the concept of security simply being that Feng Shui is predicated on the existence of Qi or energies in our environment. We have to take cognizant of our surrounding and the flow of energies within it. Objects and structures in our environment can affect the Qi in our living space. Safety or for that matter security, is one aspect that hinges on how we manage the Qi in our environment to create peace and harmony in our life.

In the home environment, the Qi can be vibrant, stagnate or hostile depending on the locations and directions of the property in relation to the immediate external forms such as mountains, rivers, land contours etc. However, in the context of home security, we shall focus on the vicinity of the property such as the compounds and the perimeter of the house and the interior.

## How secure is your home?

### **GARDEN SECURITY**

A house such as a bungalow can have a big compound and garden where trees, plants and other micro-organisms co-exist. Qi thrives in areas of verdant vegetations and lush greenery especially when water is present such as ponds or fountains. The locations of these water features are important in determining the correct orientations for Qi to collect.

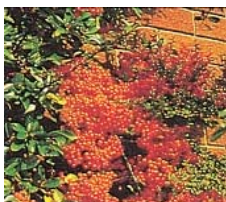


Your garden may have valued possessions that thieves would love to steal. It may also contain equipments that could help them break into a house. Most burglars look for easy ways of getting into a house or garden and by taking a few simple precautions, you can reduce the risk of being a victim of burglary.

### ***Natural protection***

Your garden is your home's first line of defense against crime. You can prevent potential intrusion by using plants as a natural protection. Plants can be especially useful when trying to prevent access over fences and walls or under windows. Branches should be allowed to grow along the tops of fences and walls to make things more difficult for anyone attempting to climb over. Thorny plants can tear off burglars' pants!

A barrier of prickly hedge offers hardy protection around your property. Some of the plants suitable for defensive planting are Pyracantha, Berberis Stenophylla, Ulex Europaeus, Creeping Juniper, Blue Spruce, Common Holly, Giant Rhubarb, Golden Bamboo etc.



You can also take the following pro-active measures:-

- Clear away clutter and spruce up the garden by putting away all implements, tools, equipments etc in the garden shed
- Use high security padlocks to secure the garage or shed. Have lockable steel boxes grounded to the floor to store your tools if possible. If your garage cannot fit your ladders, try using chain or padlock them horizontally to a sturdy bracket on a wall.
- Valuable equipments and useful tools such as lawnmowers, garden furniture, barbeques sets, bicycles and ladders should all be kept locked up in the garage
- If a burglar alarm is installed in your home, consider extending it to cover any outbuildings and garage/sheds
- Use nature’s protection such as thorny shrubs as a buffer at the perimeter fencing or any borders adjoining the property
- Use outside security lighting which comes on automatically
- Photograph valuable plants or ornaments in the garden as proof should there be any claims later under an insurance policy if any

Any measures taken to secure your home should also involve your outbuildings as well. Areas such as a detached garage shed or workshop often contains items that are worth stealing such as work tools that could prove helpful to break into the rest of the property.

Qi flows smoothly in a garden which is lush, well kept and lit, when there is balance between sunlight and shade, a perfect interaction between Yin and Yang. The positive energies generated from the garden can then flow into the house. However, you should ensure that the space directly in front of your main door is empty of plants to create an empty space or “bright hall” for Qi to collect and gathers. Plants should not be sited too near the front door or it will block the sunlight and cast a shadow on the doorway. This is inauspicious for the residents as shadow radiates Yin energies which are too negative for a house.

### ***Man made protection***

Security products such as padlocks should be used for locking the outbuildings. It should be made of robust construction and offers maximum protection against sawing of the shackles, padbar or staples. Ensure that the gatepost or door to which it is fixed is rust free, not broken or in need of repair.



Your garage or shed that has a connecting door into your house should always be locked so that a thief could get not in and work on the door inside without being detected.

### ***Burglary Self-test***

We should be aware of any weak spots which are susceptible to intrusions within the parameters of our home. Just like a Feng Shui audit on a house can help us align the flow of Qi in our living space, we should also undertake a security audit for security reasons.

A burglary test should begin by observing your property from the front and back. Look out for any compromised situations such as inadequate locks, easily accessible doors and windows or openings that a burglar could break into. Hidden areas where intruders can wonder around unseen should be made as clear and open as possible with straight eye view into the garden. Any hidden area in the garden that cast deep shadows at night should be lit up with security lighting.

Use gravel paths and drives to prevent silent approach by intruders. It is a cheap and subtle way of discouraging thieves from your garden. The gravel makes a loud noise and for the same reason, it is worth considering putting gravel near windows or doors as the noise of any movement on it can alarm the residents or a dog.



Make the back garden a difficult area to access with prickly hedging or fencing around the perimeter.

However, any pathways or driveways around the house should be curvy and not heading straight in the direction of the front door as this creates fast moving energies hitting the front door. These energies also known as “Sha Qi” are inauspicious and cause disharmony for the residents.

### ***Exterior Lighting***

Light plays an important role in Feng Shui as a form of activation or cure based on the principles of the 5 elements – Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. Light symbolizes Fire. Depending on location and/or direction, light can be productive, destructive or exhaustive in the elemental cycle of Qi.

Light should be considered a useful addition to perimeter security. It can either be switched on manually or automatically operated such as a passive infra-red which is triggered or activated when someone comes into its field of vision. The light can be set to stay on for predefined period of time and then it will re-set itself if the cause of its activation is no longer present. A passive infra-red unit can activate either single or multiple lights.



Lights can help to make our approach towards the front door, rear door or garage safer, not only lighting up when someone approaches your house but also when you approach, so that you can see whether anyone is lurking in the shadows. However, a lighting post such as the above should not be directly facing your front door as it focuses sharp energies towards the house and causes disunity in the home.

It must be noted that lights can be triggered by certain animals and may be a nuisance to your neighbors whenever they go into their garden or when someone walks past the front door of your house. However, this problem can be easily overcome by adjusting the field of the activation on the infra-red console. (Beside lights, another alternative for exterior defense is using passive infra red beam for perimeter fencing to detect motion of intruders.)

You should also ensure that your lights are not intruding into your neighbors' windows or those of passing vehicles by fixing them facing downwards. Try fixing the lights at a height of at least 2.5m (8 ft), so that they are out of easy reach.



You should immediately change any fused light bulbs so that the area remained well lit. Light that goes off on its own is not an auspicious sign as it signifies depletion of Qi and security will likewise be compromised.

### ***Fencing***

The most vulnerable part of the house can be the rear. According to a national Crime Survey, some 60% of all domestic burglaries happened via the rear or side windows and doors.

By putting up a 2 meter high fence around the back garden will help to keep the house secure. As further reinforcement, the fence should be topped with 30 – 45 cm of open ended or other similarly weak trellising to prevent the prospective intruder from climbing over it without a risk of physically breaking the trellising. The noise of this alone and the risk of self injury is a deterrent in itself.



However, please ensure that the sharp spikes at the top of the fence are point upwards and not towards the house especially in the direction of the front door as this is inauspicious.

Any fencing should not be confined within a tight circumference around the house as this will restrict the flow of Qi. The fencing as per picture on the right is acceptable.



All types of perimeter fencing can be softened with the right species of plants thereby reducing the Spartan look and at the same time promoting the circulation of Qi. Fence toppings can also be mixed with barbed wire such as “climbing rose” for a more greenery look and added security as single strands of barbed wire along



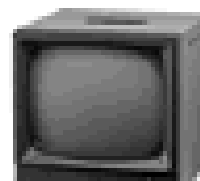
the top of a fence are fairly easy to overcome by intruders using wire cutters. However, a mature rose climbing along and over the top of the wall or fence will offer a more substantial barrier.

Hedges and shrubs in the front garden should be well trimmed and kept to a maximum height of 3 ft so that an intruder is not able to hide behind them. Moreover, any hedges which are allowed to grow as high as the house tend to trap the free flow of Qi. This is not auspicious for the residents as the trapped Qi is stagnant and unhealthy.

Burglars generally look for houses that appear to be empty and are easy to access via the back of the property. The surrounding area can also provide good cover, for example trees and untrimmed bushes. Burglars also prefer homes which have no visible signs of protection such as alarms and lighting.

### ***Monitoring Equipments***

Installing a surveillance camera that is linked to your TV/video to overlook your garden is a good idea as it will add an extra element of security to your home and at the same time, offer you the benefit of observing your garden and its beautiful flora in the privacy of your living room. This can further be enhanced by installing low pressure sodium lighting within the garden itself, activated by a photo-electric cell, making it both attractive and secure after dark.



For sake of keeping good record, a dedicated digital video recorder should be used for the surveillance system in the event of a break in.

Therefore, take all precautionary measures to adequately protect the areas of your house such as gardens and compounds against unwanted visitors. However, please remember that good Feng Shui in the form of green landscaping is one thing but it should not be at the expense of security. Both should complement one another like the interaction of Yin and Yang. It is only when one is secured and safe can Qi be said to bring harmony to our home.

### **Gates**

New-age Feng Shui places importance on the design of gates which supposedly ushers in prosperity. In classical Feng Shui, the design of a gate does not hold any auspicious meaning other than serving aesthetical and functional needs. It is a fallacy to think otherwise.

However, in the context of security, a gate should be treated as a first line of protective barriers against burglars. It should be made harder to climb and easily see through such as a wrought iron gate. Due to its ornamental ironwork, a wrought iron gate makes it harder to climb and any intruder can be seen through them.



A burglar can be prevented from lifting off the hinges of the gate by welding the hinges shut. It is recommended that a high security padlock with weather proof covering be used on a manual gate.

An automatic gate is preferred to a manual one not only because it is convenient but it makes alighting from the vehicle to open the gate unnecessary and thus avoiding any risk of being attacked in the open.

Make sure that the gate is free from rust and corrosions. Not only it gives a run down appearance but oxidation radiates negative energies. Security wise, it weakens the material over time and becomes vulnerable to attack by physical force.

The following are pointers to consider when selecting an automatic gate:-

1. Type of automation
  - Is it Swing opening, Slide opening or Barrier Bar type?
2. Size of the gate
  - Height, Weight & Length?
3. Type of traffic & access control (for safety and convenience)
  - Single family, Small family or Large family?
4. Opening and closing cycle of gate per day & direction of opening
5. Method of gate opening and closing for vehicle entry
  - Via Phone
  - Via Key switch
  - Via Key card/digital key
  - Via Radio control
  - Via Guard
  - Others
6. The voltage and phase for the gate to operate.

An auto gate should allow for manual access via a smaller built-in gate within the main gate in case of power failure. It is recommended that a high security padlock with weather proof covering be used on the built-in gate if there is one.

According to Feng Shui myth, a gate is auspicious where the design of the gate is such that the center is higher than the sides. Based on classical Feng Shui, there should ideally be only one main gate. Otherwise, the inflow of Qi will be split between 2 gates, rendering it unstable. If another gate is unavoidable, it should be smaller relative to the main gate to minimize the negative impact on the flow of Qi.

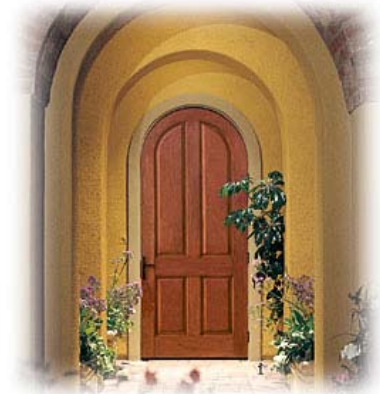
From the security point of view, what is important is that the gate is strong, durable and functionally sound.

In Feng Shui, the gate may not be as important compared to the front door of the house but nevertheless, it is considered inauspicious should there be any sharp object or “poison arrow” pointing towards its direction from the surrounding area. A poison arrow can be any object or structure that has sharp angles such as sharp edges of neighboring building or the triangular roofline of a neighbor’s house or an oncoming straight road that seems to aim directly at one main gate.

## **HOME SECURITY**

### ***Front door***

In Feng Shui, the front door is the mouth of Qi. If aligned in the auspicious direction and/or location, it will bring prosperity and harmony to the residents. If aligned in the inauspicious direction and/or location, the residents will suffer misfortune and bad luck. Likewise, in security, the front door acts as a protective shield against any malevolent forces in the form of intruders and burglars.



However, the design of a door does not have any influence on the luck of the residents as far as classical Feng Shui is concerned and any special design prescribed is at best, psychological in its impact.

The important thing to consider is that your existing door is in good condition. Any crack on the door or warping or misalignment not only appears unattractive to visitors but makes it inauspicious in attracting Qi into the home. Solid core wood doors with rugged frames that cannot spread apart with a pry bar are recommended.

A door with wooden hollow core should not be used for obvious reason. It should be of solid construction and preferably 50 mm thick, if not 44 mm at the very least. The frame should have a rebate of not less than 18 mm. If the door is weak, fitting a steel plate measuring 200 x 200 mm around the lock area can also act as door reinforcement. Glazed or glass paneled doors should preferably be of a minimum 6.4 mm laminated glass which consist of two pieces of glass bonded together with a sheet of laminate. This is far more difficult to break compared to plain glass and will not shatter, therefore making a forced entry difficult and time consuming for the burglar. Another option is using equivalent strength polycarbonate sheet, with consideration given to using internal grilles as additional protection.

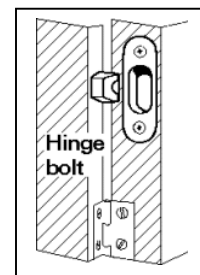
### ***Door lock***

The front door should be fitted with a high security mortise deadlock with at least 1" throw deadbolt which preferably be made of hardened solid steel for maximum protection. The key cylinder, preferably with a rotating disc mechanism, should offer maximum resistance against physical attack and manipulation such picking, bumping and racking. The key must not be easily duplicated and be strictly controlled.

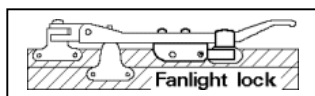


### ***Door accessories***

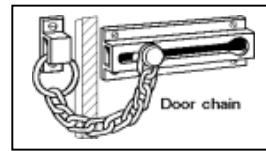
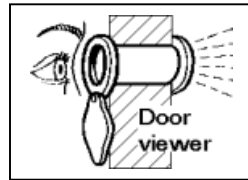
Bolt hinges are recommended against physical removal of the door if the door opens outwards. Otherwise, 4 pieces of robust 5" stainless steel butt hinges should suffice. A metal strip fitted to the frame side can act as reinforcement for the strike plate to prevent jacking with crow bar.



Use fanlight lock for door with fanlight.



A door guard or chain is useful as auxiliary items for extra control in the opening of the door in association with a door viewer as peep hole that has long and wide vision.



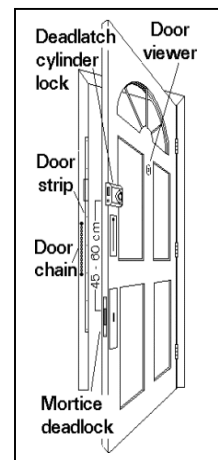
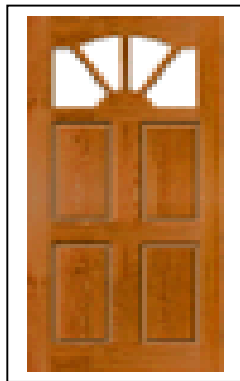
(As added security, fit a contact breaker on the door such as a magnetic door contact and connecting it to a burglar alarm system. When an intruder forces open the door, it will trigger the alarm.)

### **Security Door**

If the budget allows, an investment in a security door is highly recommended for the front door.

Features of a security door to look out for:

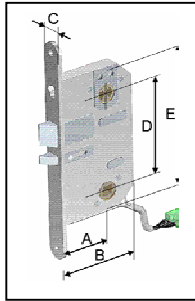
- 1) Solid structure
- 2) Light and easy to open
- 3) Dust proof
- 4) Airtight
- 5) Pry proof
- 6) Drill proof
- 7) Soundproof
- 8) Environmental friendly
- 9) Material: steel plate



In Feng Shui, a door that opens into a spacious lobby or foyer is considered auspicious as Qi is able to collect and disperse from thereon. There should not be any clutter or obstructions near the door to block or inhibit the inflow of Qi. The door should not be facing any poison arrow on either side. It is believe that any object that has sharp edges pointing at the front door radiates negative energies and causes disharmony and misfortune to all the residents in the house.

### **Choice of lock**

It is very important that the right type and size of lock is chosen. The following are points to consider:-



- A – Backset
- B – Depth of lockcase
- C – Width of forend
- D – Centre to Centre
- E – Length of lockcase

The following are questions to ask before buying your lock:-

- Type of usage – front door, back door, patio door?
- Material of door – Wood, Steel, Composite?
- Single leaf or Double leaf door (is a rebated forend needed?)
- Lever handle, thumb-turn and/or key operation lock?
- Type of key cylinder (Euro DIN Profile, Ansi etc)?
- Safety features of lock e.g. panic release function
- Security features of lock e.g. auto deadlocking, resistance against picking, hacking etc
- Backset of the lock (what is distance from key cylinder to the edge of the door)?
- Quality & security standards of lock?
- For retrofitting of existing lock (what is the backset of lock & distance between handle hole and key hole or centre to centre)?
- Type of key system – keyed alike or master keyed with other locks?
- The environment the lock is subject to?
- Insurance coverage?

### **Master key system**

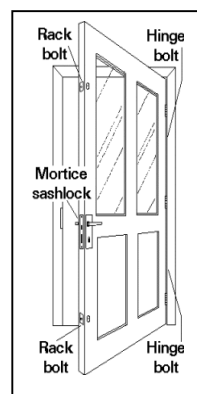
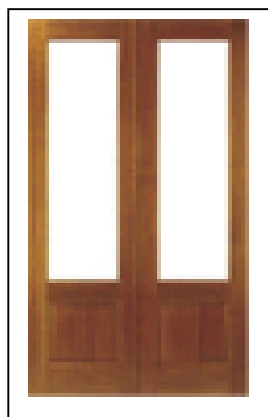
A master key system allows the holder of the master key to access all doors in various locations throughout a building by using only one key. A system can be configured to allow for different levels of access based on user groups and locations or rooms.



A master key system provides convenience to the user by reducing the number of keys the user needs to carry. However, when designing a system, always remember to consider both current and future needs such as the function of a room, the responsibilities of a person, the rights of access etc. Allowance should be made for any future extension or renovation of the building. As far as possible, a master key system should be kept simple.

### **Back door**

In Feng Shui, the back door is the exit of Qi. For security reasons, the back door is also the gateway or “getaway” for burglars. It may not be as important as the front door according to Feng Shui but it poses the same risk as the front door in terms of security.



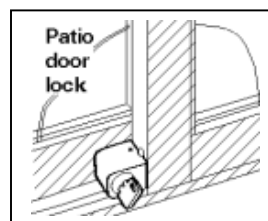
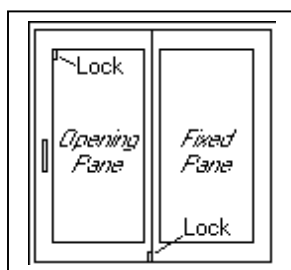
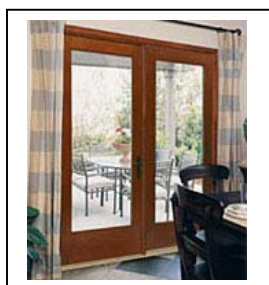
In fact, based on Crime Surveys, more than 50% of all domestic burglaries happened via the rear or side windows and doors. If burglars can be stopped from reaching these points, an actual break in can be prevented. As such, it should be accorded the same priority as the front door with all the trappings of high security. Please refer to page titled “Front Door” for the type of locksets and accessories recommended.

As further reinforcement, the back door should also be fitted with a concealed rack bolt at approximately 6” from the top and bottom of the door. If there is any glass panel on the door, it should be laminated to resist breaking by physical force and fitted from the inside.

### ***Patio door***

Patio doors or any side door is commonly found in a bungalow. The type of locks used on these doors is mostly push to lock and key to open. It is recommended that these doors are fitted with long throw bolts at the top and bottom on the active or opening door.

To prevent the patio doors from being lifted off their tracks, wood blocks of a suitable depth should be screwed into the channel above the opening door.



Beside the front door, these types of doors are also conduit for Qi to flow into the house. It may not be as important as the front door but if aligned in the right direction and location in relation to the front door, it can bring harmony to the residents. Based on the principles of the 5 elements, each compass direction and location is represented by an element. The element in the location of the patio door or any other side door should support the element in the location of the front door for harmonizing the auspicious direction of the front door.

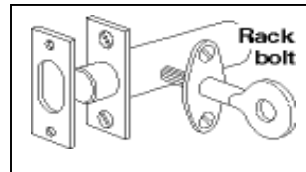
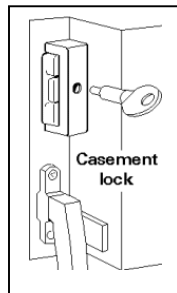
## ***Windows***

Windows are other openings in the house for Qi to flow in. Besides ventilation, it allows sunlight to bask the house and making it Yang during the day. As such, most windows especially larger ones should be located at the front of the house such as the living room as this area is more active and Yang oriented. However, windows can also represent another entry point for burglars to enter the house. In Feng Shui, there should not be too many windows as it can cause Qi to rush out. Likewise, too many windows create ample opportunities for intruders to break in.

There are different types of windows. The following are some of the common ones.

### *Wooden casement*

Casement windows are designed to be locked by securing the window to the frame. Most casement locks are screwed to the window rather than to the frame making it weaker. For security sake, look for locks which secure the frames instead of just simply securing the handle or window stay.



If the window is flush to the frame, a mortise rack bolts should be fitted into the window at either end of the frame and operated internally with a key. Alternatively, use door mortise bolt for a longer bolt throw.

For extra security, a window should also be fitted with grille. However, it should be fitted on the inside of the window and allow for a mini opening for escape purposes during a fire. (A vibration sensor should also be mounted on the grille and connected to an alarm system. In case of a break in through the window, it will trigger the alarm.)

### Metal Crittal

You can either secure the window or the handle to prevent opening. One of the main problems with this type of window is the narrow profile of the frame, making it difficult to fit devices.



Certain locks are specifically designed to fit this type of windows. For fanlight window, use a fanlight lock.

### Aluminium windows

This type of window usually comes with a locking handle which is not quite secure. This is because it is the handle which is being locked and not the window. As most handles are not of a good casting standard, they are more inclined to break under pressure or come loose from the frame.

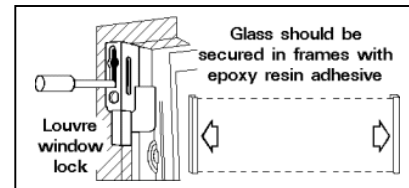


It is possible to fit extra locks to aluminium windows but care should be taken to ensure that there is adequate metal around the window to be able to fit the lock without contacting the glass. Suitable locks designed for this purpose are available.

## Louvres

This type of windows is not commonly available anymore due to its inherent lack of security. Some measure can be taken to make them less vulnerable but these should be seen as only temporary solutions. It is best to replace them at the earliest of opportunity.

The glass in both frames can be coated with an epoxy resin adhesive. If the windows are sited in a vulnerable position, you may need to fit a grille or bars though the better option is to replace them.



## ***Interior Lighting***

Time switches and programmable switches can be set inside the house to ensure the house is lit when no one is at home. A light should not be left on solely in the hall as it may indicate to the intruder that it is just a decoy and the premises are actually unoccupied.

Simple and sophisticated devices are available which can switch lights on and off in random fashion automatically and may even be set to control other electrical appliances such as radio or television. Automatic switching will help to convince the intruders that the house is occupied.

Security lighting is one of the easy ways to scare off a potential intruder. However, we have to bear in mind that lighting cannot work miracles. The same applies to Feng Shui. It is only sensible to make sure that your first or physical defenses – the locks, the doors and the windows - will resist physical attack. If it is convenient, you should let your neighbor know that you are out or better still being a member of your neighborhood watch scheme. Effort should also be made to inform your local police station that you are away.

Other passive monitoring devices such as motion detectors use an infrared ray to detect motion within the living room or other interiors of your home. This acts as secondary defense (your first defense are your locks on your doors and windows) and can be made to trigger an alarm if the intruder manages to break in through the front door without first triggering the burglar alarm due to malfunction or some other reasons.

## ***Alarm Systems***

Alarm systems are considered money well spent in the protection of your home and family. It is a good deterrent as studies have shown that it is far less likely that you will become the victim of a burglary at home if you have installed and maintained a functional burglar alarm system. It should be borne in mind that alarm system is only one of the elements within a complete security package and not adequate on its own.



There are many types of alarms systems with different installation modes available today. However, they should meet with certain international or at least national quality standards. This usually refers to hard-wired systems as opposed to wire-free. Hard-wire systems are relatively more expensive compared with many wire-free or DIY packages in the market, but they are more reliable and should conform to a country’s Police Intruder Alarm Policy.

If you are thinking about installing an alarm system in your home, it is worth taking into account that the police response to alarm activation varies according to the type of alarm installed.

The following are two types of alarms together with the relevant police response:-

- Remote Signaling Alarms

It includes intruder alarms which terminate at approved central monitoring stations with certain standards of compliance. Such alarms are to be registered with the police and identified by a unique reference number (URN) and can include personal attack alarms. The police response to their activation is based on the assumption that an offence is taking place taking into consideration competing urgent calls and available resources. Such a response will also be conditional upon the number of false activations in any 12 month period, in which case the activation may receive a lower priority attendance.

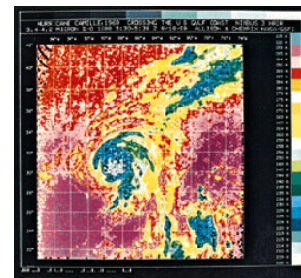
- Audible Only and Hybrid Alarms

It includes bells-only and automatic dialing alarms, as well as alarms from non-compliant companies and non-compliant central stations. URNs will not be issued for these systems. To obtain police attendance, in addition to their activation, this type of alarms will also require some indication that an offence is in progress e.g. from a witness.

(A panic attack button is a useful addition to an alarm system as it is active regardless of whether the alarm system is armed or not. It instantly activates the alarm using a finger during an emergency).

### ***Electromagnetic fields***

In Feng Shui, the flow of Qi can be affected by the electromagnetic fields in the environment. Passive infra-red waves emitted by alarm systems are considered benign as compared with energies from high tension electrical cables/structures such as pylons, telecommunication towers, transmission stations, etc



If any of these structures is located in the vicinity of your home, the negative energies emitted can harm our health and depletes the Qi in our environment.

## **FENG SHUI, SECURITY & THE ENVIRONMENT**

The principles of Feng Shui hinges on the management of Qi in our living environment and making it vitalizing for our health and well being. The application of modern technologies for security can complement this ancient art in managing risk in our daily life.

In our quest for harmony and peace of mind, we can make it easy on ourselves by taking pro-active measures to safe guard our life and property with the help of modern technologies. Feng Shui alone is not enough. Without adequate safety measure in the form of high security systems, we put ourselves and family at risk of the criminally inclined who will strike at the slightest opportunity.

By being in tuned with the energies of our living space using Feng Shui and the technologies of high security, we can make our home a haven for ourselves and our family.

For more free information and consultation on security products/services or for that matter Feng Shui, please visit <http://www.proactive-qi.com>.