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Motion Sensors Protect Canada Winter Games



With just three days notice, Northeastern Protection Service installed sensors at venues used for Canada Winter Games.

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Most of the time, the best security measures are the ones you don't see.

Such was certainly the case at the [2011 Canada Winter Games](#), a bi-annual event that this year attracted 2,700 young competitors from more than 800 cities and towns across the country, making it the biggest sporting event in Halifax history.

In the days leading up to the Games, [Northeastern Protection Service](#) installed three [Visonic TOWER-20AM](#) motion sensors at three venues athletes were using for competition during the two-plus weeks from Feb. 11 to 27. In addition to hosting Canada Winter Games events, the venues across Nova Scotia serve as year-round entertainment venues.

"If something had happened to their infrastructure during the Games, some of the events wouldn't have been able to take place," says Roger Miller, vice president of operations at Northeastern Protection Service. "It's conceivable that failure of these systems could have caused certain events to be postponed or canceled, and that scenario would have impacted very negatively on the region."

The TOWER-20AM motion sensors feature Octa-Quad technology, which uses eight PIR sensors (as opposed to only one used in other outdoor detectors), with each sensor acting as a QUAD detector to accurately determine whether an alarm is justified.

They also have a weather-proof housing and patented anti-masking protection that can distinguish between masking spray, rain and sprinkler irrigation, providing an exceptionally high resistance to vandalism and masking.

With only three days' notice before the Games kicked off, Northeast Protection Service was "down to crunch time" on its installation, Miller says, but he's confident in the job the integrators did and heard no complaints from the clients.

The sides first began talking about working together when they met at a trade show last fall, Miller says. The clients liked the fact that the sensors were portable and could be relocated if necessary. "They also needed something that was reliable in an outdoor industrial environment," Miller says.

Prepared for the worst

Temperatures during the Games ranged from minus four degrees Fahrenheit to close to 50 degrees Fahrenheit, with two-foot snow drifts decorating some areas and heavy rains slapping down on others. More than 2.5 inches of rain fell in one day, Miller says. Another day saw wind gusts up to 55 mph.

The TOWER-20AM is the first detector to prevent false alarms caused by outdoor interferences, such as rain, snow, lightning storms, swaying bushes and free-roaming animals, while still providing reliable detection of real threats.

"There's no way to avoid false alarms, but you have to understand what will cause them," Miller says. "It will never be 100% foolproof. It's up to us to make the best decision. You have to prioritize the alarm signals as they come in."

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