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## Ian Penfold, Solar Gard's Architectural Manager highlights the benefits of a window film in case of vandalism

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We all know that broken glass poses a major threat to safety. Not just for occupants of a building, but sometimes even for general passers-by.

For example, in the event of vandalism, flying broken glass causes the vast majority injuries, rather than the missile. We have all seen the damage caused by the riots that took place in London recently and resulted in a number of high profile buildings having their windows smashed. However, covering buildings in steel, while it may prevent glass damage, will also spoil the look of the building onto which it is placed, marking it as a site of vandalism and taking away the benefits of natural light or a pleasant view for those inside. Alternatives to this measure need to be looked at.

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Safety film works by holding the pieces of glass together when a window is smashed, preventing it from breaking into dangerous shards and causing injury. The newest, state-of-the-art safety and security film is made from the highest quality materials, such as tough, high-tensile polyester and ultra-strong mounting adhesives. These films aren't the stereotype, dark silver surfaces you might see in the back of a van most of them are made to be invisible on glass surfaces. Typically, a range of clear and solar control versions are offered, ranging from 4 to 14 Mil (100 to 350 microns) in thickness, meaning that people are still able to enjoy the view from their windows. This ensures that the appearance of a period building such as The King's School is not affected.

By keeping the glass shards together as one pane, it also gives windows a certain degree of flexibility. This means that in event of breakage, rather than the glass breaking and blowing inwards, the film will flex, keeping all the fragments together and within the window frame.

Replacing all the glass with laminated, security glass is a costly option, and permanent alternatives such as bars or shutters can block the view and appear out of place in school or other public environment. By contrast, window film is installed quickly, uses no drilling and installation allows the normal routine around the building to continue virtually uninterrupted.

With many options available on the market, school managers and building owners should consult with a professional window film installer to ensure the right film is applied. In addition, professional film installation maintains and reinforces the integrity of existing glazing systems.

Safety and security window films have passed some of the toughest government and consumer testing to provide effective overall window safety, making it an attractive investment for a range of projects from small- to medium-sized businesses, to public buildings, homes, hospitals and schools.

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