

6 Traps to Place on Your Property Against Looting Rioters

By Rich M



Protests against the murder of George Floyd have led to protests around the country. This isn't the first time we've seen this happen, but it is probably the most widespread and has lasted the longest than ever before. The Black Lives Matter seems to have gained legs and is receiving lots of support from a wide range of places, including many who didn't support them before.

Unfortunately, there have been many cases in which peaceful protests have been hijacked by bad actors, probably from ANTIFA, who have turned those peaceful protests into riots. A number of different police chiefs have come forth, stating unequivocally that the demonstrators were not the rioters, but rather that the rioters were embedded in with the peaceful demonstrators, using them as camouflage and trying to shift the blame for their bad actions onto those who are just exercising their First Amendment rights.

That camouflage has been largely successful, as many people aren't seeing the difference between the two groups. Not only that, but the actions started by the agitators has encouraged others to join them, following the psychology of "mob mentality." This has led to blocking roads, attacking cars, looting and even some deaths.

With all this going on, it's no wonder that a couple in St. Louis was afraid for their lives when a group of several hundred people broke down the gate of their private community. Dubbed "Ken and Karen" by the media (disparaging terms), they stood in front of their house, armed, guarding it. While the legality of this move has been

questioned in some quarters, it appears that they didn't do anything that breaks the law. Missouri has implemented the "Castle doctrine" allowing them to protect their property. On the other hand, I'm not sure I can agree with the wisdom of that couple standing in front of their home, armed. Some can claim that their actions were provocative and threatening to the crowd of protesters. While the man held his rifle appropriately across his body, his wife doesn't appear to know what she is doing and is seen to be pointing her pistol at the crowd, with her finger in the trigger guard.

Personally, if I was guarding my home, I would try to do so without being quite so obvious. While they might have done what they did to be a deterrent, two-armed people, with no spare magazines visible, aren't really that much of a deterrent to 100 people, let alone a few times that number.

With a little preparation, there are a number of things that they could have done or that any of us can do, which will help make our homes more secure from raging mobs, without having to stand outside our homes making targets of ourselves.

We want to be careful about this though. US law does not allow the use of booby traps; or rather, you are liable for any harm that your booby traps cause. So I'm sorry, you'll have to forget about the caltrops and land mines. That's too bad, as I'm really fond of caltrops. But even though they don't kill, they are intended to injure, which you would be legally liable for.

Lights & Cameras

The first thing that any of us should do is to mount lights and cameras on our home. Outdoor lighting is a good protection against your home being broken into anyway, making it a good idea. While that lighting may not stop a mob going down your street, it will make it easier for cameras to get a good shot of anyone who comes on your property.



Don't bother trying to hide your cameras; but place them high enough that they can't get to them. Roof-mounted cameras are hard to get to, and if anyone climbs on your roof to get to them, they'll be caught on camera, assuming you have your cameras set to ensure that you have full coverage.

By the way, those lights and cameras should be triggered by motion detectors, so that you don't have to leave them on full-time. They can be connected to your computer, so that you can have a permanent video record of what has happened.

Hedges

One of my favorite defensive measures for the perimeter of your property is hedges. If you put a fence in front of your home, it's obvious what it is. Few of them are any problem for that mob, as they can either knock them down or climb over them. About the only fence which will do much good is a tall one with pointy spikes on the top, but that's rather obvious.



On the other hand, you can plant a hedge around your property line, which, if done properly, is much harder to get through. By "properly" I'm referring to several things:

- Planting the bushes close enough together so that people can't push between them. No more than two feet apart.
- Make sure that your hedge overlaps any fences or corners of your home, so that there are no gaps there.

- Intertwining the branches of the bushes, so that the top of any one branch might be two or three plants away from its roots.
- Using some sort of bush with sharp thorns. I like bugambilia, which grows very quickly.
- Grow the hedge both high and thick. Four feet high is high enough to be hard to get over and three feet thick makes it very hard to climb over it, especially with the thorns.

No hedge, like no fence, is going to be a perfect barrier, but it is a deterrent. People who really want to get to you will find a way. But if you put a gate at your walkway, they'll take that. This gives you a way of channeling how they get onto your property, controlling any following confrontation into a position that is favorable for you.

Electric Fence

If you have a fence or hedge, you can easily make it an even bigger deterrent by electrifying it. Electric fences are used to control animals on a fairly common basis, giving you a way to explain it away. You can either say that you've installed it to keep your dogs in or stray dogs out.



Electrifying your fence doesn't mean making the whole thing electrified, but rather adding an electric fence element to it. This is usually a single uninsulated wire, mounted

to the inside of the fence with standoffs. It provides a non-lethal electric shock to anyone who touches the wire.

I think technically that you are required to post a sign for an electric fence, warning people that it is electrified. That's fine, the sign serves as a deterrent too. But posting it doesn't mean that you have to post it every five feet. Find out the minimum requirements for your area, they aren't real close. For example, Forth Worth, Texas requires posting every 25 feet. So be sure to do that and not allow it to be any farther, so that you are in compliance with the law.

Tripwires

The term "tripwire" can mean a number of different things. Typically, trip wires are connected to alarms of some sort, regardless of whether they are mechanical or electronic tripwires. They can also be connected to a variety of snares and traps, all of which would be of questionable legality.

If you don't have your lights and cameras set up on a motion detector, I'd recommend an electronic tripwire just inside the borders of your property. These usually use some sort of laser, which unlike the ones they use in Hollywood, are invisible. Properly mounted in hidden locations, they are virtually undetectable and can turn on your lights and cameras.



However, there is another way that I think you can get away with using tripwires on your property and that is to use them to trip people. Running ankle-high wires across

your lawn, firmly anchored, so that they won't pull out, can be an effective way of tripping up anyone who comes onto your property, without permission. You will probably need to grow your grass a bit higher to hide them, but it will be worth it.

Spike Strips

Spike strips are one of the few traps which are not illegal. While you can't use caltrops to puncture tires, you can use spike strips. Go figure. Placed across your driveway or even embedded into it, these can make sure that anyone driving onto your property isn't going to be driving back off.

Of course, this is only useful if someone is driving onto your property. It's not going to do you much good against protesters on foot. So this method is of limited utility. Even so, it might be worth doing.



One thing you need to know about this is that while the spike strips are not illegal, you might end up having to pay for people's tires, even those who enter your property without permission. Taking care of those damaged tires just might be the price to be paid, in order to avoid being charged for some crime.

Dig a Ditch

If you have enough property, one of the best things you can do is to dig a "drainage ditch" at the edge of your property. Dug properly, that ditch can be made easy to get into

and out of from the street side but difficult to get out of on your property side. That way, anyone who gets into it, might not get any farther.



If you want to make that even worse, put a barbed wire fence in the bottom of it and throw a bunch of junk in the bottom too. Old rusty junk with sharp edges and corners will make transitioning that ditch even harder, discouraging people from even trying.

Once again, this won't be perfect, because they can always come in via your driveway. I guess you could turn it into a moat and install a drawbridge, but keeping the crocodiles in the moat might be difficult.

Comments and Notes

A thick hedge of pyracantha (common name "firethorn") will stop any human, and as a bonus, the blood trail will be easy to follow

Evergreen, lovely orange berries, and thorns 2-3" in length a rhino would have trouble with what's not to like

Hedges completely stopped tanks from proceeding in France in WW11, so I don't think, if done right, they would have a problem stopping people.

in regard to a hedge or fence defense >> if it's in a location where vehicle ramming is a possibility – well casing buried in concrete and spaced 4-5 feet apart can slow it down if not stopping it completely – adding barbed wire between the posts and allowing a hedge to grow around it adds to the hedge efficiency

Why not plant blackberry vines draped over a fence. Provides protection and food source you can even claim they grew naturally.

There is much that can do to at least get ready for rioters without making your urban home look like the Siegfried Line.

Doors can be reinforced prior to any rioting. Glass windows can be covered with plastic film that makes it extremely difficult to knock the glass from the frame. The glass can be broken and bullets can penetrate the plastic film, but the glass won't go flying and create secondary injuries and rocks flung against the glass, while they will spider crack it, will not shatter it.

There are many Thorne plants that can be planted ahead of time that can be part of the landscape and not really noticed until the mob tries to penetrate it. Especially with a large piece of property such as was depicted in the mob scene, there are many plants that grow into a hedge or a barrier that is more impassible than even a a double apron barbed wire barrier or concertina wire or chain-link topped with quadruple strand barbed wire.

I defy anyone to penetrate a blackberry bramble barrier. There are other plants that are equal to the blackberry barrier. In some parts of the country blackberries are almost like weeds and are very easy to grow.

In addition to plastic film on glass, there are roll down metal shutters that can cover glass that can be installed or in some part of the country, hurricane shutters are a design feature. They also serve as barriers to rioters.

Broken glass strewn in a tall lawn is a significant barrier, especially if shooting is involved. What's the first thing most people do storm a place when shot is fired against

them? They flop down. If the ground is strewn with broken glass flopping down is going to be far down on the list of defensive actions to take.

If one has time, punji sticks can be placed in the ground so that an attacking force is directed to a clear area and away from the punji sticks. They don't need to be lining the bottom of a ditch, just sticking up in the air in close formation will discourage folks from taking that route. Of course, it is incumbent upon the homeowner who is going to use that method to prepare the sticks ahead of time.

Eighteen-inch-long sticks sharpened on both ends will work quite well. They can be branches that you cut from bushes and trees that you normally trim. Instead of throwing them in the green recycle bin, just trim them to the appropriate length and you can sharpen them at your leisure. I would get a pencil sharpener that is extra-large. At the big box hardware stores and on line you can buy hand operated pencil sharpeners designed for lumber marking pencils. They make it quick and easy to put a nice sharp point on a stick.

Punji sticks don't even have to be placed all over the yard. placed at six inch intervals to cover a depth of eight feet will keep anyone from jumping the punji patch unless they are a long jump athlete. And who wants to take that leap knowing if you don't make the jump you will really be D.Q.'d by being impaled on the sticks.

If they are open and visible no one can claim it was a trap designed to lure them to self-harm. They are an open and visible deterrent installed in a time of civil disorder.

It would be only if things get really bad and it became a world without rule of law that I would resort to punji pits and in that case I wouldn't be worried about what the neighbors thought or possible repercussions from law enforcement either. Nor the Homeowners Association!
Then I would want my home to look like one of the bunkers on the Siegfried Line.

Blackberries? Easily passed through with leather garments. I keep a rider's coat in my truck for places like that. Doesn't help with long thorns like Ponderosa Lemon or aforementioned horticultural long sharp thorns.

I don't know what state you are living in, but most states have laws about what you can put up to protect your property and certain items are prohibited. The theory being that some person may innocently wander onto your property and injure themselves. Even though you may have no trespassing signs posted in accordance with the law covering

such postings, somebody could need aid and assistance and be on your property for such purpose and could injure themselves or it could even be a relative to whom you had shown the traps and he forgot they were there and injured himself.

A “deterrent” for protesters might be nothing more than a good sprinkler system, easily activated to turn people back. The next line of “deterrence” for rioters could be well placed dye packs. At least they could be easily identified. Then next level could be low hanging “pet fences” that deliver a substantial shock. The level of “deterrence” before the bullets start flying could be a spring-loaded device, ankle or shin high, that will swing a broom handle or some other rod with enough force to cause a limp, permanent or otherwise. After that, the rioters/looters get what they deserve.

Plant some nasty cacti around your house instead of a hedge. Like jumping cholla. Although that only grows in dry climates.

I grew up in a remote area of B.C. and to keep out the grizzly bears and deer, my father planted a hedge of blackberries. Nothing could permeate that hedge and it was on the side of a cliff, so no one could drive through it without plummeting down a 100-foot rock embankment. Not many people have that type of topography, but blackberries grow and spread fast.

If you want an impenetrable hedge, we have a wildly invasive plant that was imported years ago for living fences called Multiflora Rose. Grows thick and tall with really nasty thorns that break off easily and seem to be mildly poisonous to most people to the extent of being quite painful and scratches and punctures are inflamed.

Some good plants for hedges. Long, limber Bois D’arc limbs were cut and the cut end stuck into the ground and would often root and grow. Woven together the limbs made an impenetrable barrier. Pyracantha is great, fast growing, easily available, dense hedge with nasty thorns and always full of yellow jackets. Bright orange pulpy fruit is edible/nutritious. Eleagnus is a fast-growing grey leaved hedge that is extremely dense and thorny. Blackberry vines and Blaze climbing rose grown on a split rail fence are superior to concertina wire. Canes from the desert plant ocotillo can be cut and the cut end pushed into the ground, it roots and grows easily and is not to be trifled with. The big century plants like Agave americana, planted in a bed and watered, grow fast and form incredible thickets in only 2 or 3 years.

A mean thing I did years ago, living in a rent house in Austin, one of my roommates said there was a peeping tom, and I found his footprints in the flowerbed outside her

window. I cut a couple of two-foot lengths of 2x6 and drove 16d bright all the way in, two rows with 4" spacing. Brights are very sharp, and about 2 inches of nail was exposed when I buried them points up. A couple of nights later there was a big ruckus in the middle of the night, didn't catch Tom but he left a torn-up flowerbed and a bloody boot behind and never came back.

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