

Crime What Works What Does not Work
<http://www.ncjrs.gov/works/index.htm>

PREVENTING CRIME:
WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T, WHAT'S PROMISING

A REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

Prepared for the National Institute of Justice

by

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Some excerpts:

"In the absence of better theories about when and where lighting can be effective, and rigorous evaluations of plausible lighting interventions, we cannot make any scientific assertions regarding the effectiveness of lighting. In short, the effectiveness of lighting is unknown."

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"...results are mixed. We can have very little confidence that improved lighting prevents crime, particularly since we do not know if offenders use lighting to their advantage."

"We may speculate that lighting is effective in some places, ineffective in others, and counter productive in still other circumstances. The problematic relationship between lighting and crime increases when one considers that offenders need lighting to detect potential targets and low-risk situations (Fleming and Burrows 1986). Consider lighting at outside ATM machines, for example. An ATM user might feel safer when the ATM and its immediate surrounding area are well lit. However, this same lighting makes the patron more visible to passing offenders. Who the lighting serves is unclear."