

# Crime Prevention

**Y**our local police department is dedicated to reducing criminal acts and ensuring that the community is safe. And there are steps you should take to protect yourself and your family, at home, in your car and in public.

## Protect Yourself

- ❑ Minimize the amount of cash and credit cards you carry with you daily.
- ❑ Be alert to your surroundings. Walk confidently to your destination and do not be embarrassed to cross streets if you feel intimidated.
- ❑ Carry a loud alarm or whistle and have it handy.
- ❑ Travel in safe areas, on well-lit streets and during the daytime when possible, especially if you are unfamiliar with your destination.
- ❑ Do not put any identification on your house or car keys and be sure your children do not in the event these keys are lost.

## Protect Your Home

- ❑ Make sure your homeowner's insurance policy is up-to-date and meets your current coverage needs.
- ❑ Install good locks on windows and doors. Don't leave your doors unlocked even for a short period.
- ❑ Do not hide keys in mailboxes, planters or under mats. Leave an extra set of keys with a neighbor or friend.
- ❑ Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in all entry doors so you can see who is outside.
- ❑ Ask for photo identification from service or delivery people before letting them in. If you are unsure, call the company to verify the service person before you let them in.
- ❑ Consider marking valuables in your home with your name and some sort of ID number. Inventory your valuables by taking photos or video.
- ❑ Be sure your street address is large and clear of obstruction so police and other emergency responders can find you quickly.
- ❑ Install outside lights and keep them on at night. Consider motion-sensor lights near outside paths, entrances and parking areas.
- ❑ Keep your yard clean by pruning back shrubbery so it does not hide windows or doors.
- ❑ Create the illusion that you are home when you are not by installing timers to turn lights on and off at different times of the day and night.
- ❑ Do not let mail or newspapers pile-up. If you will be away, ask a neighbor or friend to collect them.
- ❑ Consider installing a home alarm system.
- ❑ Ask your local law enforcement officials for a home security survey.

## Protect Your Community

- ❑ Report any activity that you think is suspicious to the police.
- ❑ Join your Neighborhood Watch Group or form one to look out for each other and help the police.

## Protect Your Identity

- ❑ Use computer passwords that are unique and change them regularly.
- ❑ Make sure your children know never to give out any personal information over the Internet. Consider a software program to control their access.
- ❑ Only do business over the Internet with companies you know and trust.
- ❑ Use a secure browser that will encrypt or scramble purchase information. If none is available, call the company's 800 number or mail your order.
- ❑ Never give your bank account or credit card information to anyone or any company that you have not thoroughly checked out.
- ❑ Never write your ATM Personal Identification Number (PIN) on your ATM card and do not use a PIN related to your personal information (birth dates, addresses, etc.)
- ❑ Keep a master list of credit card and bank information in a secure place at home and report stolen or missing cards to the issuer immediately in order to limit unauthorized use of your card.
- ❑ Watch your credit card after giving it to store clerks to be sure extra imprints are not being made.

## In Your Car

- ❑ Keep windows rolled up and doors locked.
- ❑ If you suspect someone is following you, go down active streets and head for the nearest police station, fire house or open store. Do not go home.
- ❑ Park your car in well-lit areas and look around before exiting your car. Lock your vehicle.
- ❑ When walking to your car, keep your keys handy and ready to use.
- ❑ Before getting into your car, always check to be sure no one is hiding in the back seat.

## Especially for Seniors

- ❑ Go out with friends or family, not alone.
- ❑ Use direct deposit for Social Security and other regular checks.
- ❑ Sit close to the driver on a bus or train. Choose busy, well-lit stops and watch who gets off with you. If you're concerned, go into a store and ask for help.
- ❑ Do not allow anyone to rush you into signing anything- insurance policies, sales agreements or contracts, for example. Always read everything carefully and have someone you trust check it over.
- ❑ Never give your credit card number, bank information or Social Security number to anyone over the telephone.
- ❑ If you are suspicious, call the police or Better Business Bureau before you do business with a company or person you do not know.