

# Crime Prevention Tips

*'Tis the season to be jolly, but it is also the season to be wary of burglars, thieves, pickpockets, and other holiday grinchers. Nothing can ruin the holiday spirit faster than becoming the victim of a crime.*



## Tips for home:

**Lock your doors and windows when you go out.** Don't leave the drapes open with your presents in plain view. If you leave your drapes open, place gifts where they can't be easily seen.

**If you are leaving town for the holidays, make sure your home appears occupied.** Leave inside and outside lights on timers and have your neighbors pick up newspapers, mail, and take flyers off your door. Ask neighbors to park in your driveway. Put a timer on a talk radio station.

**Never leave tree lights on when no one is at home.** Remember, ornaments can also burn. If you choose to have a live Christmas tree, make sure it is always properly watered.

**Don't put out empty boxes advertising your new purchases.** Open boxes completely to flatten and turn product illustrations "inside" to conceal images. Tie or tape into a bundle 2'x3' and up to 6" thick before placing next to your recycling stacking bin or tan "Papers" recycling cart.

**If you have a garage door opener, do not leave the control openly displayed in your vehicle.** Keep the door leading from your house to your garage locked, and the garage door closed.



## Tips for holiday shopping:

**Use the trunk of your vehicle to keep your packages out of sight.** Keep your car locked at all times. Make several trips to your car to deposit packages in the trunk.

**Don't allow yourself to become so burdened down with packages that you become a tempting target.** When walking through parking lots, be aware of your surroundings. Walk with authority.

**Be aware that thieves and pickpockets also do some of their biggest business during the holiday season.** Keep your purse tucked tightly under your arm. Avoid carrying your checkbook, cash, and credit cards all together in one wallet, because if a thief gets the whole package together, they can cash checks with your identification and run up a credit card bill in a short amount of time.

**Don't display large rolls of money in public.** You never know who's watching! Also, spread your money around in different pockets. That way a pickpocket can't clean you out in one fell swoop.

**If you go to an automatic teller machine, try to go during the daylight hours.** If you must go at night, pick a machine that is well lit and visible to passing traffic.

**Never give your credit card number over the telephone to anyone when you did not initiate the call.** Only order merchandise from reputable companies over the telephone.

*Just by using a little planning and some good common sense, most holiday crimes can be avoided.*