

Holiday Safety Tips

Traveling

- 1) Don't post on social media that you're traveling. Never advertise an empty house.
- 2) Check all fluids, tire pressure and tire tread and get any maintenance needed before you get on the road.
- 3) Always have an emergency safety kit in your vehicle (first aid, water, snacks, blankets, flashlight, flares, jumper cables and cell phone charger).
- 4) Plan your trip, know your route in case your GPS stops working and make sure someone else knows your itinerary.
- 5) Check weather, traffic and road conditions before you leave the house.
- 6) Always be aware, drive sober and make sure all occupants are buckled up or in car safety seats.

While Shopping

- 1) Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you. Trust your instincts; if something doesn't feel right, it's probably not - call 9-1-1.
- 2) Shop with a friend; there is safety in numbers.
- 3) Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- 4) Pay for purchases with a check, credit, or debit card.
- 5) Do not leave your purse/wallet in shopping carts.
- 6) Do not carry wallets in a back pocket. It should be placed in a front pocket for safety.
- 7) Be alert, criminals look for the "high dollar store" shopping bags with your purchases. When possible, slip bags/ purchases in a plain nondescript bag.
- 8) Watch purchases while eating in mall food courts; bags as well as purses can easily be switched or taken.
- 9) Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to open car doors, etc. When possible have your packages sent to package pick-up where you may retrieve them in a well-lit and heavily populated area.
- 10) Get keys out of pocket/purse before leaving the store.
- 11) Do not leave packages in vehicle. If changing locations, put them in the trunk BEFORE you leave one destination and get to the other. Be watchful if you observe anyone following you in the parking lot or in a vehicle once you leave the store location.
- 12) Shop early and leave early to avoid evening darkness and park in a high visibility and well lit area as close to the store as possible.
- 13) Put all personal valuables out of sight before going out to shop.
- 14) If you feel uncomfortable, ask the Security Officer to escort you to your vehicle
- 15) Walk briskly, confidently and directly through the parking lot. Do not be distracted by talking or looking at your cellphone.
- 16) Be cautious of people handing out fliers or asking questions in the parking lot.
- 17) Watch for people who may be following you inside as well as outside the store. If you suspect you are being followed, report it immediately to store security.

At Home

- 1) Lock doors and close windows when you leave your house, even if it's only for a minute.
- 2) When leaving home for an extended period of time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house, pick-up your mail and newspapers, or you can put a hold on mail and newspaper delivery.
- 3) More and more purchases are made on-line so if you're expecting a package and are not going to be home, track your packages on-line, ask a neighbor to pick it up for you or request a signature for proof of delivery to ensure that someone is home. Research your delivery options.
- 4) Thieves usually don't approach homes that appear to be occupied.
- 5) Indoor and outdoor lights should be on an automatic timer so it appears someone is at home. Put timers for lights in different rooms and have them come on and go off at different times.
- 6) Large displays of gifts should not be visible from the windows and doors of your home.
- 7) Do not put out boxes from either large or small purchases on or before garbage day. Doing this allows others to see what new things you have in your home.
- 8) If someone knocks on your door that you do not know, don't answer it. Speak through the door to let them know your home. Teach your children to do the same thing but never let the stranger know they're home alone. Tell them their parent is busy and can't come to the door.
- 9) If they seem suspicious, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- 10) Don't leave keys hidden outside or in fake concealment rocks. Burglars often know how to spot the most common hiding places quickly.

Decorations

- 1) Pick the right holiday lights. Check for broken or burnt out bulbs. Choose LED lights over incandescent lights.
- 2) Be smart about your decorations. Do not leave decorations near the fireplace. Placement of decorations and wires should be carefully thought out.
- 3) Don't overload your outlets. Don't go over the maximum that your extension allows. Overloaded outlets = fire hazard.
- 4) Pick a fresh tree and water it daily. A dry tree could be a potential fire hazard.

Emergency 9-1-1
Police Non-Emergency 713.884.3131