

With school bells coming to a close and vacation on everyone's mind, burglars will be looking for opportunities to spoil your summer vacation. Burglary is a crime of opportunity that takes little planning on the part of a burglar. To prevent you and your home from becoming a quick target for a burglary, let's get back to burglary basics.

- Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave the house or go to bed. Don't forget to close those windows after enjoying a cool summer breeze. Lock your doors even if it for a short time.
- Leave lights on when you go out. If you are going to be away for a length of time, set your lamps on automatic timers that go on/off in the evening making it appear your home is occupied. Timers are very inexpensive and can be found at most any hardware store, Target or Wal-Mart plus they are easy to set up.
- Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards and driveways at minimal costs for equipment and additional electricity costs.
- Make your home look occupied. Leave a radio or television on with the volume up, giving the impression that someone is home.
- Keep your garage door closed. Open garage doors tell burglars what you have that is worth them stealing (lawn equipment/tools). Keep your garage door locked to prevent easy access into the main part of your home.
- If you will be away for any length of time, stop daily deliveries of newspapers or have your neighbor pick them up. Contact the postal service to hold your mail so it does not collect in your box.
- An unkempt lawn is sure sign no one is home. Arrange for a law service or neighbors to maintain your lawn during your absence.
- Check your locks on doors and windows. Replace them with secure devices as necessary. Pushbutton locks on doorknobs are easy for burglars to open. Install deadbolt locks on all your outside doors. Invest in good locks. Your local locksmith can assist you with your specific needs.
- Sliding glass doors are an easy invitation. Special locks are available but a slat or broom stick will help in a hurry.
- Trim your shrubbery around your home to reduce cover for burglars. Lush bushes and shrubs make excellent hiding places.

Homeowners need to reduce their risk of becoming a target. To do that, we need to reduce the temptation for a thief to target you.

- An alarm system is excellent for home security. It provides peace of mind to homeowners, especially while on vacation. There is a wide variety of alarm systems on the market for every budget and need.
- Lawn equipment, bicycles, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight. What they don't see, they can't think about taking.
- Mark your valuables. Marked items are harder for a burglar to dispose of and easier for police to recover.
- Always lock your garden sheds and garages so thieves don't have access to items easily sold at local pawn shops.
- Use window coverings (blinds/curtain/window films) on garage and basement windows.
- Never leave notes on your doors such as "back in a little while", "gone shopping".
- Never leave keys under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other "secret" hiding places -- burglars know where to look for hidden keys.

These are common crime prevention tips that every homeowner can practice. In case you do become a victim, keep a detailed inventory of your valuable possessions, including a description of the items, date of purchase and original value, and serial numbers, and keep a copy in a safe place away from home -- this is a good precaution in case of fires or other disasters. Take photographs or video recordings of valuable objects, heirlooms and antiques. Your insurance company can provide assistance in making and keeping your inventory.

Be a good neighbor. Call law enforcement immediately if you notice anything suspicious in your neighborhood. **The MOST important thing YOU can do is CALL THE POLICE to report a CRIME or any SUSPICIOUS activity.** You must be the eyes of your neighborhood. And remember you can always remain anonymous.

Remember the three L's of Crime Prevention: LIGHTS, LOCKS & the LAW!

Light up your residence, lock your doors at all times, and call the Law when you see something suspicious.