

# Burglary Prevention Tips

- Make your home look occupied, and make it difficult to break in.
- Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave the house or go to bed. Even if it is for a short time, lock your doors.
- Leave lights on when you go out. If you are going to be away for a length of time, connect some lamps to automatic timers to turn them on in the evening and off during the day.
- **Keep your garage door closed and locked.** We take several reports a day about weed eaters, bicycles and other items missing from garages, due to the door being left open over night.
- Don't allow daily deliveries of mail, newspapers or flyers build up while you are away. Arrange with the Post Office to hold your mail, or arrange for a friend or neighbor to take them regularly.
- Arrange for your lawn to be mowed if you are going away for an extended time.
- Check your locks on doors and windows and replace them with secure devices as necessary.
- Sliding glass doors are vulnerable. Special locks are available for better security.

## **Don't Tempt a Thief:**

- Lawn mowers, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight
- Always lock your garden sheds and garages.
- Use curtains on garage windows.
- Never leave notes on your door such as "Gone shopping."

## **Locks...Get the Best:**

- No lock, regardless of its quality, can be truly effective. Key-in dead bolt locks provide minimum security. Ask a locksmith for advice on your situation.
- Change locks immediately if your keys are lost or stolen.
- When moving into a new home, have all locks changed.

## Targeting the Outside:

- Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards.
- Trim trees and shrubs so that they cannot be used as hiding places for intruders.

## Windows:

- Install window locks on all windows. Be sure to use ones that can be easily removed in emergency situations so you and your family can exit the home through the window.

## Alarms:

- 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.
- Make several inquiries to different companies for the best security system available to you.
- **If you have a home alarm system, use it!** *Activate your alarm system* — Alarm systems are only useful when you remember to activate them.
- Many individuals have alarm systems but do not arm them because it is inconvenient. Many burglars know this and will not be deterred by a window sticker or sign indicating that the home has an alarm system.

## If Your Home Is Broken Into:

If you come home to find an unexplained open/broken window or door:

- Do not enter - the perpetrator may still be inside.
- **Immediately call 9-1-1.**
- Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence.
- Write down the license plate numbers of any suspicious vehicles.

- Note the descriptions of any suspicious persons.

### **Other precautions you should take:**

- Never leave keys under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other “secret” hiding places -- burglars know where to look for hidden keys.
- 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. Make a photographic or video record of valuable objects, heirlooms and antiques. Your insurance company can provide assistance in making and keeping your inventory.
- Trim your shrubbery around your home to reduce cover for burglars.
- Be a good neighbor. If you notice anything suspicious in your neighborhood, **call 9-1-1 immediately**.
- Mark your valuables with your driver's license number with an engraver. Marked items are harder for a burglar to dispose of and easier for police to recover.
- Form a Neighborhood Watch Group. We can help you work with your neighbors to improve security and reduce risk of burglary.

### **Car Burglaries**

Tips on how to avoid car break-ins:

- Do not leave valuables in plain view:  
(GPS devices, lap tops, PDA's, cell phones, MP3's, wallets, purses)
- Do not leave windows or sunroof open.
- Do not leave doors unlocked.
- Do not leave keys in the vehicle.
- Do not leave the garage door opener in plain view.
- Do not leave out items with personal information.
- Do not move valuable items to the trunk while in public view.