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Is  
Your  
Home  
Safe?

Protecting Your  
Home • Property • Neighborhood



# **TOWN OF PARADISE**

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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**Gabriela F. Tazzari-Dineen, Chief of Police**

A message from the Chief,

Burglaries and thefts are the most common crimes committed in Paradise. Over the past years, the Town of Paradise has experienced an increase in residential / vehicle burglaries and thefts from unlocked or poorly secured homes, garages and vehicles. Based on our statistics, it is likely that you have been or know a victim of these crimes. Because we live in such a great and safe community, we tend to let our guard down at times.

Despite the fact that we have made numerous arrests of burglary and thieves, more criminals seem to show up in their place. The single biggest crime tip that I can suggest pertaining to these crimes is to avoid being an easy or inviting target.

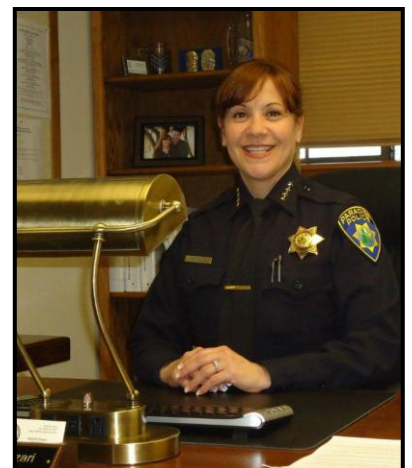
For that reason, I ask that you to please work with the Paradise Police Department to help prevent and reduce vehicle / residential burglaries and thefts by following a few simple crime prevention tips. With a vigilant police force and community constantly working together y communicating and watching out for each other, we can make a difference.

Within this material are some great crime prevention tips and ideas you can follow to help us help you prevent burglaries and thefts. I hope that this material will be helpful in your prevention efforts. Thank you for doing your part to make Paradise a safer community.

Sincerely,

Gabriela F. Tazzari-Dineen

Chief of Police



# Are You Prepared?

**Household burglary** is the unlawful entry (entering through an unlocked door or window) Or forcible entry (breaking a window, cutting a Screen, or breaking through a door) of a residence which usually involves theft.

**Illegal entry** may include any structure on the premises, including garages, sheds, or outbuildings. Burglary is a crime of opportunity.

While it may seem that homes that are burglarized are picked at random, they are usually chosen using a selection process-

- **Is the home occupied?**
- **Does it have easy access?**
- **Are there good places to hide?**
- **Will it be easy to get away?**

Did you know that most burglars enter through the front door, back door, or garage door? A seasoned burglar knows that the garage door and back door offer the best opportunities.

The more effort it takes to break into your car, home, or business, the better the chance you will not be burglarized. Luckily, strengthening these defenses doesn't have to be expensive. Any safety feature that makes your home more time-consuming to break into may deter a potential burglar.

Know what types of dangers are more prevalent in your community. Use this manual as a guide to make your home safer-before your sense of security had been attacked.

*A burglar breaks into a home every 15 seconds.  
Prevent burglaries using their 3 greatest threats:*

- *Light*
- *Time*
- *noise*

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**Every year there are over 5 million burglaries in the U.S.**

# LOCK IT UP

## LOCKS

Deadbolt locks offer the best protection. They can be opened on the inside by thumb turn and outside by key or combination. They are a good choice for a door near glass. Quality deadbolt locks use a beveled casing that prohibits the use of channel-locks pliers to shear off lock cylinder parts.

Buy a deadbolt with:

- a bolt that extends at least 1" from the edge of the door.
- the connecting screws on the inside of the door.
- the strike plate connected to the door frame with 3" screws.
- a tapered or steel guard around the cylinder of the key section.

Record and then remove the "key code numbers" from the bottom of the padlock to keep others from making a duplicate key using the code.

## KEYS – safety or access?

- Never leave a spare key concealed anywhere near the front door (*under a rock, in a planter, under doormats, or above the ledge*). That's the first place a burglar looks
- Never give service people a house key, arrange to have someone home for service calls.
- Never label house keys. If lost, they provide valuable information to a stranger.
- When using valet services, leave only the vehicle key with the attendant. (*it eliminates the opportunity to duplicate house keys*)
- Leave an extra key with a trusted neighbor or relative for emergencies or going on vacation.

**40% of homes don't have deadbolt locks- or they are only on the main entry doors.**

# LOCK SECURITY CHECKLIST

- Replace all locks right away when moving into a new home.
- Know where your keys are at all times and who has a key to your home.
- Use combination (*no key*) deadbolt locks in homes with children so they don't have to worry about a key.
- Choose key-in-the-knob locks with a dead-latching plunger to keep them from being pried open. Add a deadbolt lock to door for added protection.
- Secure all swinging doors with deadbolt locks.
- Use a door knob-in-lock with a "dead latch" mechanism to prevent slipping the lock with a shim or credit card.
- Use a jimmy-proof deadlock on any hinged door where the strike can be securely fastened to the door frame.
- Avoid using rim locks (*horizontal or vertical deadbolts*) that can easily be forced open. If you must use a rim lock, is it mounted on a strong surface with heavy-duty hardware?
- Avoid using spring latch locks that offer little protection.
- Use heavy-duty, high-quality padlocks with a strong steel hasp to secure garage doors, storage sheds, fences, toolboxes

# IS IT EASY TO GET IN ?

## DOORS

Exterior doors should be made of solid metal or wood. (*test it, push a straight pin through the door. If it pushes through without much effort, the door is hollow and should be replaced*)

The weakest part of a door is the strike plate that holds the latch or lock bolt in place. This is where someone can forcibly enter by kicking or prying a door open.

### **Install exterior doors or doors from attached garage with:**

- A four-screw, heavy-duty, strike plate with 3" wood (*non-removable*) screws for added security.
- Security-type, non-removable hinge pins.
- Flush lever bolts that are long, sturdy, and mounted into a solid door frame at the tops and bottoms.
- Double key deadbolt locks (*on doors with windows to prevent a burglar from breaking the glass and reaching inside to unlock the door*).
- Impact-resistant glass.
- A securely mounted screen or decorative grills over a glass panel.
- Sturdy, decorative door handles.
- A secure fit in the door frame.

### **For added protection:**

- Install impact-resistant glass in any location within 42" of a lock door.
- Keep doors locked when home alone.
- Lock and check all doors before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Lock any door that is not visible to you when out working in the yard.
- Secure attic access from garage.

### **Sliding glass doors can easily be lifted out of their tracks**

- Install screws in the upper track above the door frame.
- Insert a wooden pole, stick, or dowel into the track, limiting the door's movement.
- Use a secondary blocking device such as a locking bar or metal "charley bar" that folds down to limit the movement of the door.
- Make sure the rollers in older doors are in good condition and properly adjusted.
- Adhere decals or stickers announcing alarm system, a dog, or any neighborhood watch programs

**Only 1 in 4 home burglaries involves forced entry  
80% of all break-ins are through a door.**



## GARAGE DOORS

- Install automatic openers on garage doors or Deadbolt-type locks on each end of the garage Door. Use cane bolts and hasps.
- Make sure garage doors are securely shut flush with the floor, leaving no space to be pried open.
- Lock any door connecting the garage to the house.
- Keep an automatic garage door opener in a secure location. Never leave it in an unlocked vehicle or when the car is being serviced, never rely on automatic garage door openers for security.
- Park vehicles in the garage and shut the door right away to prevent others from accessing your home and belongings. If the door is left open, a would-be thief would know you are gone.
- Cover windows to keep others from being able to see into the garage.
- While on vacation, unplug the automatic garage door opener and padlock the track. Remove any knobs or rings that an intruder could reach to access through an opening.

**Be sure all family members can open every door and window in case of an emergency.**

## WINDOWS

Windows are one of the main ways a burglar may access a home, especially those in the basement or at ground level Windows are easy entry points because they are often left open.

Casement (*crank*) windows can easily be forced open if left partially open. Upper floor windows may be accessed from a stairway, fence, tree, terrace, or balcony. Most windows come equipped with latches not locks.

- Make sure all windows are closed and secured at night. Screens and storm windows offer added protection.
- Have impact-resistant glass in basement windows.
- Install locks on all windows. There are many types to choose from.
- Use secondary blocking devices ( *inserting a pin or nail above a window or inserting a wooden track filler*) on any window that is accessible. This will limit the window from opening more than 6" and will keep it from being lifted out of its track.
- Secure open windows with a screw, metal pin, or commercial sash locking pin in both the upper and lower sashes.
- Make sure outside doors cannot be unlocked through an open window.

**In 2002, 16 million homes experienced a burglary**

# LIGHT IT UP

Proper lighting is essential for providing safety and security. Lights allow you to move around freely while making a home appear warm and inviting. By taking the proper precautions, you may deter burglars and vandals.

- Install a yard light to protect your home. Make sure it illuminates the areas that need protecting, but doesn't shine in the neighbors' homes.
- Consider installing motion-sensor lights outdoors.
- Proper lighting will allow you to see who or what is in your yard. While you remain safely indoors.
- Make sure pathways are well-lit and free of obstacles.
- Make sure you have proper lighting when using machinery at night, both to see and to be seen.
- Install good lighting in areas where using power tools and dangerous equipment.
- Lighting increases productivity because it allows you to work earlier in the day and later in the evening than daylight hours.
- Good lighting provides security when arriving home after work.
- Cold weather (-10° or colder) may affect the operation of security lighting, making them dimmer in the cold weather months. The lights will return to their normal illumination once warmer weather arrives.

# LIGHTING SECURITY CHECKLIST

**Interior (indoor) lighting-** makes it look like someone is home. A home that is dark for several days and nights gives the impression that you may be away.

- Lights are left on periodically.
- Light timers are installed near the front and back parts of the home and on level.
- Light timers are used on a daily basis, not just when away.
- Curtains are kept closed

**Exterior (Outdoor) lighting-** allows a potential threat to be seen at home or away.

- Lights are bright enough to see and identify colors at least 100 ft away.
- The entryway leading to the front door and all exterior doorways are Well-lit.
- Windows are clearly visible, including the basement windows.
- Exterior lights are protected from being tampered with or broken.
- Exterior lighting is on a timer to establish a routine and appearance of occupancy at all times.
- Automatic infrared motion sensors or photocell lights (*turn on at dusk and off at dawn*) are installed, especially near the back or side entrance of a home.
- Garage or porch lights are never left On all day. It indicates that owners Are away.
- Yard and porch lamp posts are Installed to help eliminate blind Spots at night.

# Is the Welcome Mat out?

According to the FBI, over 60% of residential burglaries occur during the daytime.

## Open door policy

- The front door should be visible from inside your home.
- Install a wide-angle 160° door viewer or peephole no higher than 58” off the floor. Look through it before opening the door to a stranger.
- Before opening the door, ask “Who’s there?” “What do you want?” and “Do you have ID?”
- Check ID before talking to or opening the door for any repairman or salesperson. Trust your instincts. If someone doesn’t seem right, ask them to leave.
- Never allow a stranger to come inside to use your telephone. Make the emergency call yourself.
- Make sure no one has followed you home.
- Children should never open the door without permission.

## STRANGERS

- Never let strangers inside your home. Burglars often “case” a home by posing as a motorist in distress or other guise. Once inside, they look for valuables and then come back later when the homeowner is not home.
- Never have money, jewelry, or other valuables lying out in view from a window.
- Avoid discussing with others the valuables or collections in your home.
- Never tell strangers daily routines or vacation plans.
- Leave all doors that are out of sight locked, if you are working outside.
- Be suspicious of people going to the front and back door of a home simultaneously. They may be there to break in.
- Discuss home security with children, such as not talking with strangers about their home, its contents, or family schedules.

**Store any tools that could be used to break into your home, such as a ladder, safely locked away in your garage or shed.**



## Fences & Landscaping

- Design your yard with security in mind.
- Create sight lines so neighbors can see into your yard.
- If installing a fence, place the cross rails on the inside of the fence.
- Use several inexpensive low-voltage floodlights.
- Plant short, thorny bushes or shrubs under all windows.
- Eliminate hiding places by keeping all trees and shrubs trimmed. Keep shrubs below 3 feet tall. Trim tree branches up to 6 feet off the ground. This will remove low hanging tree limbs that could provide second story access.
- Keep your yard well maintained
- Install a perimeter chain link fence. A solid fence can hide an intruder.
- Padlock gates so entry is more difficult.

## House Numbers

It is difficult for emergency vehicles, utility trucks, and postal or delivery trucks to find homes and businesses whose address numbers are not properly posted. House numbers should be:

- Printed in numbers that are NO LESS THAN 4" TALL and in a contrasting color from your house.
- Visible up to 150 feet from all angles.
- Easily seen at night.
- Posted at the entrance of the driveway if your home or business is set back from the street or road.

**Emergency personnel may need to find your home quickly should an emergency occur.**



# Is Anybody Home?

## 20 Tips for when you're away on vacation

Always secure your home when away. An empty house is a tempting target for a burglar, keep your house looking the same whether you are home or away.

1. Ask a neighbor to watch the house. Have them report any suspicious activity.
2. Have good locks on all doors and windows, and **USE THEM!** Don't forget to close and lock garage doors and windows. Secure storage sheds, attic entrances, and gates.
3. Leave a vacation address, telephone number, and itinerary with a neighbor in case of an emergency.
4. Have someone you can trust stay at your home while you are away, if possible.
5. Ask a trusted friend or relative to care for pets in your home instead of boarding them.
6. Never leave house keys hidden outside.
7. Arrange for a neighbor to pick up mail, newspaper, and packages if possible instead of stopping deliveries.
8. Turn the bell or ringer on telephone down low, A ringing phone can give away your absence.
9. Have phone calls forwarded. (*some burglars call ahead to see if someone is home*).
10. Never announce absences on answering machine messages or on a note on door.
11. Arrange for someone to mow the lawn, rake leaves, shovel snow, and maintain the yard.
12. Ask a neighbor to put your garbage can out on normal delivery days and pull it back after pick up.
13. Plug in timers to turn lights and a radio or television on. Play it loud enough to be heard outside.
14. Install motion sensor lights near entrances instead of leaving lights on. Make sure they are high enough to not be disconnected or broken.
15. Leave blinds, shades, and curtains in a normal position. Never close them unless that is what you do when you are home. Consider installing a device that will automatically open and shut draperies.
16. Keep valuables such as electronics and artwork out of sight from windows.
17. Ask a neighbor to occasionally park a car at your home as you normally would. Vehicles parked outside should be moved occasionally to appear that they are being used.
18. Tell your local law enforcement your plans.
19. Check your insurance policy to make sure you are covered if you will be away for more than 30 days.
20. Set the alarm system.



**According to the FBI burglaries are more common during the summer months**

## IS YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE?

### Neighborhood Watch Group Objectives

1. Decide on the foundation or mission of the neighborhood watch group.
2. Keep track of the neighborhood membership by noting any new residents or those who have moved. Consider creating a "Welcome" basket or gift for new neighbors, include maps, menus, and a list of resources.
3. Establish a date to hold the meetings, at least twice a year, to bring everyone up to date on the latest news.
4. Discuss reporting suspicious or criminal activity with your neighbors. Talk about reporting crimes while they are in progress. Create a plan on how to report suspicious behavior and criminal activity with a local law enforcement officer. Keep a log of every offense and report it at the next meeting.
5. Organize parties and events to draw the neighborhood together. Make it fun, like a block party, golf outing, fundraiser, progressive dinner, etc.
6. Share resources and help those in need, especially within your boundaries.
7. Let others know of your existence as a group. Present your organization to your local city council and offer to participate in other community events.

## Neighborhood Watch Checklist

To keep your home safe, keep your neighborhood safe. Get to know neighbors on all perimeters as well as across the street. Find excuses to visit or stop to chat while walking.

- Find out your neighbors' concerns, Ask if they'd be willing to help organize a neighborhood watch task force. Assess if there is a need.
- If so, ask local law enforcement if they have a system that you can join or any suggestions on how to start up a group.
- Get organized with (*or without*) local law enforcement. Create a map of the neighborhood boundaries and compile a list of addresses. Choose a date for a start-up meeting and deliver invitations.
- At the initial meeting, provide refreshments and seating. Choose a platform and delegate or elect officers to run the meetings and choose the agendas. (*Note: These officers have no law enforcement authority*)
- Delegate members to investigate resources and report their findings at the next meeting.
- Discuss the means of delivering information to neighbors through flyers, newsletters, phone calls, etc.

**If you keep in good communication with your neighbors you can help look out for each other's homes.**

# NEED A SECURITY SYSTEM?

You may not need a security system if the vulnerable areas of your home are protected and you make changes in your personal habits. These steps alone may be enough to keep you and your family safe. Most security systems have sensors installed on doors, (*unauthorized entry*) the system goes into action. A security system is only good if it is activated.

There are many types of security systems. Most have audible alarm and many have flashing Lights. Consult with the local law enforcement department before buying any alarm system. Find out how they react to different systems.

## Home Safes

A home safe can be a smart investment. They are designed to protect important documents and personal property not only from a fire, but a burglar, dishonest relatives, babysitters, housekeepers, and kids.

- Hide a safe where it won't be easily found. Choose an unpredictable place away from the master bedroom or closet.
- Make sure it is a permanent part of the home's structure by anchoring it into the floor or built-in shelving
- Make using a safe part of your daily routine.
- Choose a safe code that would be difficult to guess. Change it occasionally.

## Dogs

- Get a barking dog (*any size*). It is usually enough to deter any burglar. (*Make sure your dog is licensed and vaccinated*)
- If you are going to be away, have someone stay with the dog instead of boarding it.
- Post "*Beware of dog*" signs near the house or in the yard.

**The best security is to have good quality locks on windows and doors, but when that isn't enough, many people opt to install a security system. They are especially good for people who:**

- 1. Live in isolated areas**
- 2. Live in high-crime areas**
- 3. Have expensive belongings to protect**
- 4. Spend a lot of time away from home.**
- 5. Want peace of mind**

## Alarms

### **Battery-operated door wedge alarm:**

Slipped under the door, the alarm is activated when someone opens the door. A 100 dB siren emits. (*Portable*)

**Vibration-sensor** (*windows*): sounds an alarm when activated.

**Barking dog alarm:** Motion sensor inside your house or from pressing a remote key ring button (*up to 100 ft. away*) (*Portable*)

**Alarm system:** All alarm systems should have an audible alarm that emits a loud noise (*bell, siren, or tone*) to scare off intruders and notify residents or neighbors of a break-in. If you have neighbors nearby, set up the system's alarm to shut off after one or two minutes to spare them from having to listen to the alarm for an extended period of time.

**Surveillance or video camera system:** Video cameras are positioned outside of the home or building and displays the image of anyone at the door.

**Monitored systems:** This system is monitored by a company who dispatches security guards or local law enforcement to the location when the alarm sounds. Monitored security systems offer many different features. When the alarm is tripped, most monitored systems will call to see if it is a true emergency or an accident. They may ask you to choose a duress password to use as a code word to indicate that their assistance is needed and you are unable to say so. These systems are also equipped with an emergency panic button that asks the security dispatchers to dial 9-1-1.

**Display the alarm system decals and yard signs where they are visible.**

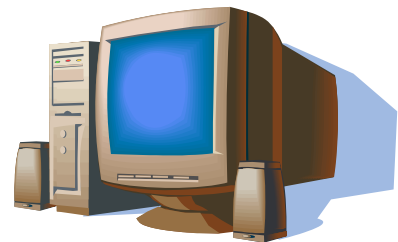
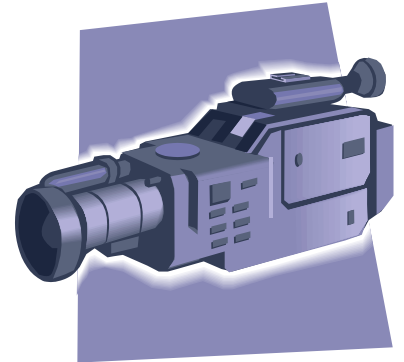
## Alarm system installation Checklist

- hire a professional to install, program, and maintain the alarm system.
- Make sure the alarm system has all of the features important to you.
- Find out if a second phone line is needed to be installed. Some systems use a phone line to call the monitor center which is also trying to call you for verification. When they can't rule out a false alarm, they call the local law enforcement to look into it. If the phone line is busy contacting your monitor system, YOU will also be unable to dial 9-1-1.
- Install alarms and phone lines up high on the home so they can't be disarmed.
- Make sure family members know how the system functions and what to do if it is set off.
- Never write the alarm pass code on or near the alarm keypad.
- Keep the response call list up-to-date when using a monitored system.
- Choose a trusted neighbor to handle an emergency if you are unable to get home quickly.
- Consider pre-authorizing a trusted neighbor to handle immediate repairs if you will be away for an extended period of time. (*Call glass company, locksmiths, etc.* )



# Are Your Valuables Safe?

Ask the local law enforcement department for advice on marking your possessions. Most suggest that all valuables be marked, including televisions, stereos, video cameras, digital cameras, computers, and small electronic appliances with some form of identification.



**This way, if items are stolen and recovered it will make it easier to identify them.**



**According to the FBI, cycle theft is on the rise.**

**The harder it takes to unlock, the harder it is to steal.**

# Valuables Security Checklist

## 1. Mark items with an engraving tool.

- Use a pre-assigned number from local law enforcement such as an Owner applied number.
- Avoid using your driver's license number on personal information for identification if possible. *(By using your Social Security Number. Driver's license number, or address you are providing a burglar with too much information to use for other forms of theft)*

## 2. Label video tapes, CDs, and DVDs with your ID number or name.

- Use a permanent felt tip marker

## 3. Catalog personal items.

- Make a list of your belongings and update it periodically. Keep a second list away from home, with a trusted friend or in a safety deposit box. Keep receipts and instruction manuals in a safe place.
- Record the make, model, and serial number of each appliance or valuable.
- Videotape or photograph possessions, including antiques. *(Make notes of any Identifying marks on rare antiques. Marking them could lessen the value)*
- Photocopy important documents for back-up.
- Photocopy the contents of your wallet, including bank account numbers and credit cards. keep contact information handy too, in case your wallet or purse is lost, stolen, or destroyed in a disaster.
- Keep this important information and any large amounts of cash in a safe place such as a safe, safety deposit box, or with a trusted neighbor or friend for safe keeping.

## 4. Protect belongings.

- Store expensive items *(Furs & jewelry)* in protected areas such as safes, safety deposit boxes, or a small closet with a solid core door *(With deadbolt lock)* that cannot be taken off its hinges.
- Keep high price items where they can't be seen from the outside. Break up the boxes to fit inside a garbage container. *(Setting them outside is an advertisement for burglars)*
- Make sure gift-wrapped packages can't be seen from outside of home.
- Consider full replacement value insurance. Additional coverage *(a writer)* may be needed for more expensive items.
- If you have recently been a victim of a burglary, know that burglars may return to replacements items.
- Consider renter's insurance. A landlord's insurance only covers the property not your possessions.

## 5. Lock up bikes, motorcycles, scooters, and ATVs.

- Know local laws and ordinances.
- Ask local retailers for suggestions in safeguarding items. Light-weight or thin cables and locks may not protect belongings.
- Park near other bikes and scooter in a visible, well-lit area.
- Lock bikes and scooters, with at least one reliable U-lock and cable attached to a solid, immovable object. Never lock them to a small tree, chain-link fence, or wooden *(or aluminum)* post. *(these can be easily broken or cut to remove locks.)* Locks that fit too big are also easy to remove. If the lock is located near the bottom of your bike or scooter, it could easily be smashed on the ground.

# Are your Vehicles safe?

A vehicle is one of your most expensive possessions. Unfortunately, they are often the target of theft. The longer it takes to break in a car and steal it on the more noise it makes, the less likely you will become a victim of auto theft occurs for the following reasons:

- A joy ride.
- To sell for parts
- To be re-sold on the black market
- To be used to commit another crime
- 

If you live in a state near an International border, you are more likely to be a victim of auto theft

## Identifying your Car

Your vehicle identification number (VIN) is for your protection. It is located on the inside of the door panel near the hood of the car, looking out through the windshield. Use it to your advantage. Have the VIN etched into the windshield or glass trim, write it on business cards dropped inside door panels or hide in or under seats. Write it in crayon under the hood. Mark other expensive accessories (*T-tops, rims, etc.*) and the engine as well.

## Anti-Theft Devices

Noisy alarms are so commonplace that they are no longer effective without another device to deter. Look for devices that are noticeable, hard to deactivate, or stop the vehicle from starting. Pretending to have an alarm by displaying the decals will not fool a car theft. (*Check your vehicle warranty before adding any non-factory feature*)

- **Keyless entry system:** (*car door keypad*) allows you to enter a code without using keys. Never give the code to a parking attendant or valet.
- **Alarm system:** (*siren, lights, and/or horn*) Activates when the car is disturbed. Make sure to have a back-up power source in case power is out.
- **Tracking system:** (*system installed, monthly service fee*) Locates a stolen car.
- **Steering wheel locking device:** (*Club, collar, j-bar*) Prevents the steering column from being stripped and are visible from outside of vehicle.
- **Crook lock:** (*a long, hooked bar*) Locks the steering wheel to the brake pedal.
- **Brake lock:** (*attached to brake or pedal*) Keeps it from being taken out of park.
- **Wheel lock:** (*attached to wheels*) Keeps a vehicle from being moved in any direction.
- **Kill switch:** (*or starter bypass*) Switch will shut off the engine's ignition system.
- **Fuel switch** (*attached under the dash or hood*) stops the fuel supply.
- **Locking gas cap:** (*key only access*) Keeps thieves from stealing gas.

**Over 1 million vehicles are stolen every year.**

**Remove the distributor cap or coil wire to your car if you will be out of town.**

## **Before you drive.**

- Keep the tank full of gas. Refill when you're down to ½ tank.
- Have the keys ready to open the car when walking towards it. Always lock the car and take the keys with you even at home.

## **On the Road**

- Always park in a well-lit area near the entrance of an open business visible by others.
- Back into parking spaces at the end of a row to be more visible. Turn tires towards the curb and use the emergency brake.
- When utilizing valet services, make sure the attendant is authorized. Only leave the ignition key. Other keys can be duplicated. Make sure the key or keychain is not marked with name and address.
- Be aware of your surroundings. If you think someone is following you, drive to a well-lit public area and ask for help.
- Avoid items or people lying in the road or flagging for help. Drive to the nearest phone and call the law enforcement department to help them.
- Never pick up hitchhikers, regardless of sex, and never hitchhike yourself.
- If you break down, stay in the car and call for help on your cell phone or put a sign in your window to call local law enforcement for help.

**Carry a cell phone for emergencies**

## **Vehicle Security Checklist**

- Never leave a vehicle running unattended and never leave the keys in the ignition when not in use. Keep windows rolled up, especially when unattended.
- Be aware of anyone hanging around in the parking lot.
- Never hide a spare key in or around your car (*under the mat, in a magnetic holder etc.*)
- Never leave a vehicle parked in a public lot for a long period of time.
- back your car into driveway (*If a car thief lifts the hood to hotwire the car. It will be noticeable.*) or park your car in the garage with the doors shut. It is much safer than parking in the street or in the driveway.
- Keep the garage door locked. (*it keeps burglars from accessing your belongings*) Consider a garage security system that is connected to your home and install motion-sensor lights over the garage door.
- Carry the proper licensing and insurance papers, but never leave the title in the vehicle. Keep it at home in a safe place.
- Store valuables in the trunk or out of sight.

**Always check the back seat of your car before entering**

## Buying or selling Boats or Cars

Because many sales are handled privately (*Without a dealer*), there is a greater chance of improper activity. Be especially cautious of a high pressure sale or deal that seems too good to be true.

- Look at the VIN or HIN to make sure it hasn't been altered. Compare the VIN(or HIN) to the registration to be sure they match. Make sure the inspection papers and license tags are up-to-date and from the same state. Never buy a vehicle or boat from someone who doesn't have the title or proof of ownership.
- By law, every car must have a Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard label on the driver's door.
- Be leery of fresh paint, (*it could be repainted for a reason*)
- Complete all paperwork at the time of the sale. Make sure you received original keys, not duplicates.
- Be careful when buying car parts for vehicle repairs, they could be stolen.
- When selling a car, never let a prospective buyer test drive the vehicle alone. Make a copy or write down the name, driver's license number, address, and phone number.

**In the U.S. approximately 775 watercraft are stolen every month and MOST are not recovered.**

## Watercraft Security Checklist

- Protect boats as you would a vehicle.
- Make sure licenses and numbers are visible and in the proper location.
- Keep clear, up-to-date records including photos. Record the serial numbers of all on-board equipment.
- Never leave important papers in a craft.
- Only dock in areas that are well-lit.
- Use locked steel cables to the dock or buoy. Detach and chain outboard motors to the boat.
- Disable the craft if you will be away for an extended period of time. (*Shut off fuel lines, remove the battery or remove the distributor cap*)
- Lock cabins, doors, and windows when not in use.
- Install an alarm system and a kill switch in the ignition system and use it.
- Never leave the boat running while unattended. Always take the keys with you.
- Lock the trailer hitch if parking the boat on its trailer.
- Store the boat in a secured location.
- Make sure your insurance policy protects your watercraft and its equipment.



# Crime in the Workplace

There are certain precautions you can take to help prevent crime or apprehend the criminals. Use some of these tips to help protect yourself.

Have a plan. Develop a checklist for employee responsibilities after an incident. Identify who will call law enforcement, secure evidence, lock the doors, and advise employees not to share the experience with co-workers so they can provide an independent account of the event.

## **If you are being Robbed**

- 1. Be a good Witness.** Stay calm, alert, and aware of your surroundings. If possible, write down everything you remember. The more accurate the description, the better chance the police have to apprehend the criminal. Pay attention to the type and color of clothing, unique characteristics such as scars, tattoos, birthmarks, and mannerisms. Note the direction of travel in which the robbers fled. If they flee in a vehicle, be aware of the type of color and if possible, the license plate number.
- 2. Always consider the individual armed and dangerous** as well as under the influence of drugs / alcohol.
- 3. Give the robber exactly what he wants.** A robber will rarely hurt someone unless he resists or provokes him. Cooperate but do not volunteer to do anything other than what is asked. It's better to lose an item than your life.
- 4. The object is to get the robber out of the store.** As soon as possible.
- 5. Inform the robber of any possible surprises.** He may resort to violence should he be startled if someone walks in.
- 6. Let the robber make the first move.** Keep your hands in plain sight. Never make sudden or unexpected movements. Never argue or play games with the individual(s).
- 7. Give the robber a clear and convincing reason if you can't or don't know how to comply** with his commands. (ex. *"I don't have the combination to the safe"*)
- 8. Remember: Money and material items can always be replaced.** Your health and safety cannot!

**63% of non-residential burglaries occur at night when the businesses are closed.**

**The average robbery takes less than 2 minutes**

# Home Invasion

Home invasion occurs when someone breaks into your home (*with or without force*) and threatens the safety of you or your family. When something this frightening happens, your reaction can make all the difference.

## **What if you're attacked?**

Your reaction should be your own personal choice based on your assessment of the situation, your capabilities and opportunities, and the level of danger involved. Should you scream, fight them physically, or comply to their demands? You will constantly need to reevaluate your situation around possibly escaping or saving your life.

## **Create an escape plan with your family**

The advantage you have is that no one knows your house better than you do. Think about ways **ANYONE** in your household who has an opportunity can escape to go get help (*sneak out a door, climb out a window, or hide in a cupboard or closet until it's safe to escape, set off an alarm, or dial 9-1-1*)

In the plan, decide who to go to for help, such as to a neighbor's home, and what to say to get help and not alert the home invaders. Weigh the possibility of injuries from the escape with the chance of survival without escaping.

During a home invasion, the occupants of the house are often handcuffed, tied-up, or otherwise incapacitated, unable to protect themselves or other family members from harm. *Most home invaders are not concerned with your welfare.*

## **Protect Yourself**

- Use solid, secure doors in your home.
- Keep doors and windows locked.
- Never rely on chain latches. Always look through the peephole before answering the door.
- Be skeptical of anyone delivering an item not ordered.
- Be on the defensive of anyone who tries to lure you out of your home.
- If someone seems suspicious, walk through the house, making sure all windows and doors are locked. Then dial 9-1-1, set off your alarm, and find a safe location until law enforcement arrives.

40% of home invasions occur because a door or window was left unlocked.

Approximately 60% of sexual assaults occur during a home invasion

The first 30 seconds are the most critical to your family's survival in a home invasion.

## **What if you are taken hostage?**

1. Remain calm. Think about ways to help yourself.
2. If you are in the process of being taken hostage, make every effort to dial 9-1-1 on your home phone. If you are unable to speak, try to leave it on speakerphone so the dispatcher can hear what is going on if you can do so without the intruder hearing the dispatcher. If you are disconnected for any reason, the dispatcher will send someone to the location. (**Note: not all cell phones are equipped with tracking devices that will automatically provide the location of the call.**)
3. Yell for help if you have an opportunity to be heard by someone who can help, such as a neighbor or a person undetected by the home invaders.
4. Home invaders may threaten to harm members of the family to get adults to comply with their demands.
5. If you have a choice, try to get the attackers to NOT tie you up, handcuff you, or lock you in a room or trunk of a car. It severely limits your options.
6. Give your attacker what he wants. If you cooperate, he may let his guard down, allowing a chance to escape or at least spare your life. (*It's harder to hurt someone who cooperates.*)
7. The greatest danger of using a weapon is that it can be taken away and used against you. (*Know the state's laws regarding weapons*)
8. Consider faking illness, this defense may work if you are being attacked especially if transported in or near a public place where someone might see you and rush to your aid. Never use it as your only defense.
9. Never allow an intruder to transport you to an ATM or another location unless it is a life-or-death decision. The second crime scene is almost always worse.

## **What if you're Burglarized?**

- Do not touch anything. Get to a safe location, especially if the burglar may still be inside. If possible, call from a neighbor's phone.
- Dial 9-1-1 or local law enforcement department.
- Make a list of stolen items, including the serial numbers to improve chances of recovery. Make 2 copies, one for law enforcement and one for the insurance company. Be sure to keep the original for your records.
- List any damage caused by the break-in. Secure the home. Cover any broken windows or doors with boards, or have them repaired or replaced and keep the receipts.
- Clean up by rearranging the interior of your home to its former state. Replace those items, which were damaged during the break-in, and any stolen items could not be recovered.
- Report it to the insurance. Ask what is required. Deal with claims and any applicable compensation.
- Consider counseling if you or your family feels traumatized.
- Follow-up on the law enforcement investigation.
- Upgrade security measures, records, and insurance coverage.

## **What if you are vandalized?**

If you have been the victim of vandalism, contact the local law enforcement department. Then contact the insurance company or agent

- Ask the insurance company about the immediate needs like covering exposed areas.
- Board up any openings that would allow anyone access.
- Ask the insurance company how it wants to inventory the claim.
- Take photographs
- Keep receipts for all expenditures used to clean up and repair of damaged areas.

# Reporting a Crime

## Your local Emergency Number

Your local emergency number is your direct line to help. Knowing how to report a crime is the first step in apprehending the criminal. When dialing 9-1-1, you may be asked:

- The nature of the incident- what happened.
- Your name and address
- The telephone number you are calling from
- Any permanent contact number (cell or home number- some cannot be traced)
- The exact location of the incident you are reporting
- Description of the people involved
- Whether you are a witness to the incident or reporting it on behalf of someone else
- If you are still watching the incident. You may be asked to stay on the line.

**Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement. You know your neighborhood best.**

## What if you're a Witness?

Be aware of suspicious behavior such as someone running in street clothes who appears to be fleeing a crime.

Pay attention to unusual activities including the sound of breaking glass., a "moving van" with someone other than the home's occupants., different people coming and going at unusual hours of the day or night, or vehicle "repairs" at unusual locations.

Watch for suspicious vehicles that may be travelling slowly through the neighborhood several times or simply left abandoned after being stolen. Some criminals may sit in a car for hours while observing a home or neighborhood, "casing" a location.

If you witness a crime or an offense is being committed, you should report it. Better still, ask someone else to report it while you continue to watch what happens. It may be necessary for you to explain in detail what actually happened.

Law enforcement will need a description to apprehend the suspect and to make the case.

## Pay close attention to people's:

- **Height/weight/build**
- **Age (approximate)**
- **Sex and race**
- **Hair color and length**
- **Shape of face, facial hair**
- **Clothing, shoes**
- **Accents, speech problems**
- **Tattoos, scars, moles, birthmarks**
- **Weapons involved**
- **Vehicle (year, make, model, license number,, state issued, color dents, stickers, etc.)**
- **Direction of travel**

**Never race toward an intruder, you could get hurt**

## Security Review Checklist *For Adults*

Yes No

- Are windows left open?
- Are side gates open?
- Is a ladder left out that could easily be used to access a window?
- Are any tools left out that can be used to break into your home?
- Are scrubs overgrown to offer hiding spots?
- do you know how many people have keys to your home?
- Can the house be accessed through the garage?
- Do you use a peephole?
- Do you have a household inventory? Is it current?
- Do you have a neighbor watch the house while you are on vacation?
- Is the outside of your home lit up at night?
- Is there an alarm system?
- Are valuables out of sight?
- Are doors solid wood or metal?
- Do you refill your gas tank when it is half empty?
- Are house numbers at least 4" high?
- Do you keep an eye out for neighbors?
- Do you carry a cell phone for emergencies?

## Talk with Kids *About Crime*

### **Home alone / Strangers**

- Keep your house key out of view.
- Never tell anyone on the phone, on the internet, or at the door, that you are home alone. Do not answer the door unless it is an emergency worker that you called for help.
- Use the peephole before opening the door.
- Never let anyone into your home without permission from the adult-in-charge. (*Discuss ploys strangers may use to gain your child's trust, such as an unexpected delivery, help finding a pet, car broke down, need to use the phone, and asking for directions*)
- Always ask permission before leaving the house or yard.
- Follow house rules.
- Go straight home after school.

### **Home Safety**

- Know how to open and unlock every door and window to your home in case of an emergency.
- Create a family escape plan with a safe meeting place.

### **Privacy**

- Keep family schedules and personal business private.

### **Protect valuables**

- Keep expensive electronics out of view.
- Pick up or lock up your bikes and other equipment.

### **Emergencies**

- Know how to report an emergency.
- Pay attention to details for the law enforcement department.
- Report any crimes or suspicious activity to an adult or law enforcement officer.



# Household Inventory

Please use this space to begin cataloging your personal items. Keep it in a safe place such as a locked safe. Use it for your own personal inventory or in the event of a burglary- for replacement or identification purposes. Use the suggestions in the manual to help mark all of your personal property. Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage on all of these items. Use the forms below as a guide.

## **Automobiles, Motorcycles, ATVs, Boats**

Make	Color	License#	Serial#	Value

## **Guns**

Make	Caliber	Serial#	Value

## **Electronics-TVs, Stereo equip., etc.**

Item	Make	Serial#	Value

## **Bicycles, Scooters, Sport Equipments**

Make	Color	License#	Serial#	Value

**Computer Equipment, Cameras, etc.**

Item	Make	Serial#	Value

**Power Tools & Special Equipment**

Item	Make	Serial#	Value

**Household Appliances- Stoves, Refrigerators, etc.**

Item	Make	Serial#	Value

**Other Items & Valuables**

Item	Make	Serial#	Value

# Important Numbers

## In case of an Emergency:

Law Enforcement: \_\_\_\_\_

Ambulance: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire: \_\_\_\_\_

Utility / Electric: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Pediatrician's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Family, Friends, Caregivers, & Neighbors

Mom's Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mom's Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Dad's Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dad's Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES:**