

STAYING SAFE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- Even though you are rushing and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you. If possible, park your car in an area of high pedestrian activity. Avoid remote areas.
- Lock your car and close the windows, even if you are only gone for a few minutes.
- Loose change is a meal for a street person; they will break your window for small change.
- Your cell phone can be sold and reprogrammed and is a sought item of theft.
- A laptop computer will keep a drug user in a high state, at your expense
- Lock your packages out-of-sight in the trunk. Place your valuables in the trunk before you get to your destination, not after, the thief may be watching.
- Be sure and lock your car, many opportunists simply look for unlocked cars.
- If waiting for a ride from a friend or public transportation, do so in busy, well-lit places.
- Consider security film for automobile's windows.
- Always report a theft to the police.
- Teach your children to go to the store clerk and ask for help if you become separated while shopping. They should never go to the parking lot or the car alone.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible; and if the credit card receipt has carbons, ask for these too. Notify issuers immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen, or misused.
- Be extra careful with purses and wallets. They may become targets for crime in crowded shopping areas, at bus stops, and on public transportation.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- At home, be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even for a few minutes. Leave lights and a radio or television on so the house looks occupied. Do not put large displays of holiday gifts in view of your windows or doors.
- If you go away for the holidays, try to keep your home appearing "lived in": Get an automatic timer for your lights. Have a neighbor watch your home and pick-up your newspapers and mail.
- If you use lights on your tree, make sure that they are in good working order.
- Immediately mark your new gifts with your driver's license number, and note all serial numbers, keeping records in a safe place.
- Remember to be a good friend and neighbor this holiday season: Share these tips with others in your family and neighborhood. Also, why not get your neighborhood together and go caroling. Do not forget the elderly and other people who might be especially lonely during the holidays. Soon, you may wish to form a neighborhood watch group. People helping people, that's what it is all about!
- And lastly, when hosting a party, find alternative transportation for intoxicated guests; and when going out drinking, please remember: Don't Drink and Drive.