



Columbus Police Department Holiday Safety-Shopping



The Columbus Division of Police reminds everyone that the holiday season brings with it the potential for an increase of certain crimes. Citizens can reduce the opportunity for criminal activity by raising their level of awareness and taking a few basic crime prevention measures to protect themselves and property. The Division offers the following practical tips for your holiday safety.

HOME SECURITY

*If you are traveling during the holidays, have a trusted neighbor(s) pick up your mail, newspaper, and deliveries. If this is not possible, have them canceled or held. Never discuss your holiday plans with strangers, Call Police at 645-4717 to request a house watch.

- When away from home, don't advertise your absence. Keep your garage door closed and locked. If you have an automatic opener, consider changing the code if you have never done so since its purchase. Leave inside lights and decorations on timers to activate when it gets dark. Never leave a note on the door saying you're out and will return later.
- This is a good time to install excellent locks, and use them! Remember an extra lock for the sliding glass door. Deposit extra cash and safeguard expensive items.

Start a buddy system with your neighbor(s) to watch each other's home. Report suspicious persons or activity in your neighborhood to the police at 645-4545. For a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1.

- Outside lighting is a good deterrent to prowlers. Consider porch or yard lights (40-60 watts) for good year-round security. Light sensors or motion detectors are a good idea.
- Every family member should have his or her own key. Don't leave keys in the mailbox, under the doormat, or in other traditional hiding places. Burglars know them all.



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Holiday Shopping Tips

- Safeguard your money when shopping. Carry no more cash than you absolutely need. Better still, pay by check or credit card. Never display large amounts of cash around the register.
- Carry your purse securely. Never leave it unattended in shopping carts or on counter tops or in the car. Don't get separated from it in a crowded restroom or dressing room.
- Never leave your car unlocked even for a minute. Always take your keys. If you must use your vehicle to store packages or valuables, place them out of sight in the trunk. Park in well-lighted areas. (When using a parking lot where keys must remain in the car, leave only the vehicle keys. Take your other keys with you).
- Have your keys ready when you walk across a parking lot. Be alert for suspicious persons prowling around parked vehicles. Report suspicious activity to the police at 645-4545.
- Walk with a companion whenever possible. Confine your routes to well-lighted, populated areas. The flimflam and con artist step up their activities during the holidays. If you are approached by a stranger with a deal that sounds too good to be true. It is.
- Report thefts immediately, no matter how insignificant it may seem. Police use crime reports to determine how to serve you better.
- After you place packages in the trunk of your car, consider moving your car to another location if you have more shopping to do.

Visit the Columbus Division of Police website at www.columbuspolice.org for information on forming a block watch in your community and for safety tips to keep you and yours safe!