



Columbus Police Department Senior Safety Tips



As the nation celebrates National Crime Prevention Month, the Columbus Division of Police offers the following tips for keeping our senior community safe.

Throughout the course of the year, various news stories are run in which the elderly are targets of fraud or physical crimes. The following tips are offered to help decrease the chances of our elderly community becoming targets. If you have an elderly family member, friend or neighbor, we ask that you please share these basic safety tips with that person:

When out and about, whenever possible, go with friends or family, not alone.

Carry purses close to the body, not dangling by the straps. Wallets should be carried in an inside coat or front pants pocket.

Don't carry credit cards you don't need or large amounts of cash.

Use direct deposit for Social Security and other regular checks.

If someone or something makes you uneasy, trust your instincts and leave.

Install good locks on doors and windows **and use them**. Don't hide keys in mailboxes, planters or under doormats. Criminals know these "hidden" spots all too well. If the need arises, leave an extra set of keys with a **trusted** neighbor or friend.

Ask for photo ID from service or delivery people before letting them in the door. If you are still uneasy, call the company to verify.

Be sure your street address number is large, clear of obstruction, and well lit so police and other emergency personnel can find your home quickly.

Consider a home alarm system that provides emergency monitoring for burglary, fire, and medical emergencies.

Don't fall for anything that sounds too good to be true—a free vacation; sweepstakes prizes; cures for cancer and arthritis; a low-risk, high-yield investment scheme. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Never give your credit card, phone card, Social Security, or bank account number to anyone over the phone. It's illegal for telemarketers to ask for these numbers to verify a prize or gift.



Columbus Police Department Senior Safety Tips



Beware of individuals claiming to represent companies, consumer organizations, or government agencies that offer to recover lost money from fraudulent telemarketers for a fee.

Don't let anyone rush you into signing anything—an insurance policy, a sales agreement, or a contract. Read all documents requiring a signature carefully and have someone you trust check it over.

If something makes you suspicious, check it out with the police, the Better Business Bureau, or a local consumer protection office. You can also call the National Consumers League Fraud Information Center at 800-876-7060.

Following the above safety tips will help decrease the chances of our community's elderly becoming victims of crime.

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!