

# KEEP IT SAFE: Burglaries(Property)

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## Burglaries

Burglaries are considered 'crimes of opportunity' because the criminal is looking for the easy way to get into your home, building or vehicle. The criminals look of the easy target such as unlocked doors, open garage doors or open windows so that they have a better chance at not getting caught.

Fortunately, there are some things that you can do to make it so difficult for burglars that they'll go somewhere else. Here are some things you can do to make burglars think twice before trying to enter your home, buildings, or vehicle.

## Tips to protect your property

### Secured Doors and Windows

One-third of home burglaries are through an unlocked door or window, according to the "Burglary of Single Family Houses" guide, published by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

Your first line of home defense is having solid core exterior doors with high quality grade 1 or 2 deadbolt locks.

### Guard Dogs

Dogs are not only "man's best friend," they can be a burglar's worst enemy. COPS reports that most burglars avoid houses with dogs. Burglars don't want to be seen or caught so a noisy dog that sounds an alarm can help deter burglars. Burglars also want to avoid pain.

### Home Security System

If you want something that not only makes noise when there's an intruder, but also calls for help, consider installing a home security system. Home security systems detect when someone enters your house uninvited, sets off an alarm, and also notifies authorities of an invasion.

### Motion Sensor Lights

Motion sensor lights (which turn on when they detect motion) is a great (and cheap) way to protect your property by shining light to portions of your property when needed - like when someone enters the area.

### Surveillance Cameras

A video surveillance system can be a costly, but it could help you sleep better at night and give you some peace of mind when away. There are many

"starter systems available that you can install yourself. The other added benefit is the evidence that it can provide to help identify the suspect in the event your property is burglarized.

If you can't install a system at this time, think about putting up "dummy" cameras to give the illusion of protection.

### Warning Signs

Got a dog or a home security system? Share that information with signs on your property. Letting a burglar know you are well protected makes you less of a target.

### A Trimmed and Tidy Yard

Trees and shrubs provide good hiding places for burglars and can obscure their entry into your home. Look at your house- do you have trees, shrubs, or structures providing hiding places for someone? If so, trim the trees/shrubs and move the other items. A shaggy lawn can also indicate that you're on vacation or away for a prolonged period of time. Consider hiring someone to mow your lawn if you're going to be out of town for more than a week.

### The Appearance That Someone Is Home

Burglars know your routine, and when there's a break in that routine - like when you're on vacation - it's a signal that your home is clear for a break-in. You want your home to appear lived in even when you are not there. You can do this by using motion-sensor lights and timers on your radio and TV to make it look like you are home.

### Avoid Giving Notice That You Are Out

Social media is a great way to keep in touch with family and friends as well as keep up with current events. It is also a tool used by burglars to keep track of home owners that they are targeting. Posting those pictures of you and the whole family at Fiesta Texas or at the beach just let burglars who are stalking social media posts know that nobody is home. One suggestion is making sure your settings are set to private setting (although friends of friends may still leave you vulnerable) or delaying your posts.

### Don't Leave Valuable in Your Vehicles

When you park your car at your home (or even when you are away from home) don't leave your bags, purse, or packages on the seats in plain view; get it down and put it away. If you can't get it down, hide it- put it on the floor, where it is more difficult for someone to grab it; lock your things in the trunk or

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toolboxes. If interesting packages are out of sight, a thief will be less tempted to break in to steal them.

### Helpful Neighbors

We talked about making your home look lived in while you're away installing security cameras and motion sensor lights- home security can get tricky, the good news is you can enlist help through your neighbors. Whenever you're away, ask your neighbors to get your mail and newspapers, and check for any deliveries, ask them to put garbage bags in your garbage can, ask a trusted neighbor to park their vehicle in your driveway while you're out of town. Signs of activity at your home is enough to deter most burglars - who count on an empty house.

If you are burglarized or have information on a burglary, please contact the appropriate agency. Below are some helpful numbers:

#### 1. If the burglary is happening, call 9-1-1

#### 2. Your local law enforcement agency

Listed are local agencies within the 79<sup>th</sup> JD

Alice PD	(361)664-0186
Brooks Co. SO	(361)325-3696
Falfurrias PD	(361)325-5041
Jim Wells Co. SO	(361)668-0341
Orange Grove PD	(361)384-2844
Premont PD	(361)348-3231
San Diego PD	(361)279-2924

#### 3. County Attorney's Offices:

<b>J. Michael Guerra</b>	<b>David T. Garcia</b>
Jim Wells County Attorney	Brooks County Attorney
(361)668-5700	(361)325-5604, ext. 159

#### 4. Crime Stoppers of South Texas

(361) 664-STOP (7867) – Tip line

#### 5. National Domestic Violence Hotline

*Crisis intervention, safety planning and referrals to local domestic violence programs.*

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

1-800-787-3224 (TTY) for the Deaf

#### 6. Texas Advocacy Project

*Information and referrals regarding legal issues.*

Family Violence Legal Line

1-800-374-HOPE (4673)

#### 7. Department of Family and Protective Services

*For reporting abuse against children, people with disabilities or the elderly.*

Abuse/Neglect Hotline

1-800-252-5400

#### 8. Domestic Violence Program Hotline:

The Purple Door ([www.purpledoortx.org](http://www.purpledoortx.org))

Toll-Free Hotline- (800) 580-HURT (4878)

Local Hotline- (361)881-8888

### ABOUT THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**Carlos Omar Garcia**, 79<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney.

Carlos was born and raised in Alice with extended family ties in Jim Wells, Brooks, and Duval Counties. Carlos began his distinguished prosecutorial career in 1997. Before being elected as District Attorney, Carlos worked an Assistant District Attorney for Kleberg and Kenedy Counties (2008-2012) and the 79<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office for Brooks & Jim Wells Counties (1997-2008). In addition to his service as a felony prosecutor, Carlos has also served as an Assistant County Attorney for Brooks, Jim Wells, and Kleberg Counties.

In addition to his background as a prosecutor, Carlos is a certified martial arts/self defense instructor, certified NRA *Refuse to Be a Victim* instructor, and NRA Pistol Instructor.

#### COMPLIMENTS OF



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