

Winter Holiday Tips

If you are traveling during the holidays, or leaving home for the weekend, take a moment to review the following suggestions to protect your home, inside and out.

- Have an automatic timer for your lights and set it to come on when it starts to get dark.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home, have someone to shovel snow, and a friend to park a vehicle in your driveway from time to time to give an appearance that someone is home.
- Do not forget to have mail and newspaper delivery stopped. To stop your mail, use the internet. USPS.com is the site. It's easy to use, it takes a minute! There are additional information for packages and magazines, and it's free!
- If the mail and newspapers pile up, it's a sure sign you're gone.

If You Are Out for the Evening

- Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it looks like someone's home.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave, even if it's just for a few minutes.

Do not display gifts where they can be seen from outside. That means when having a birthday party, a wedding or baby shower, Christmas, when everyone gets neat gifts, or whenever you get or buy a large computer, television set, bicycles, or any large, boxed item, the container attracts the attention of the thief. Keep your boxes out of sight, then cut them and put the blank side of the box so the product does not show and put it out with the rest of the trash.

Take a Holiday Inventory - The holidays are a good time to create or update your home inventory. Take photos or make videos of items, and list descriptions and serial numbers. If your home is burglarized, having a detailed inventory can help identify stolen items and make insurance claims easier to file. Make sure things like TVs, VCRs, stereo equipment, cameras, camcorders, sports equipment, jewelry, silver, computers, home office equipment, telephones, and power tools are on the list.

If you are expecting any packages from UPS/FEDEX or any delivery, attempt to lock on a time that you will be at home to accept the package. If it is not possible to be at home to accept delivery, ask the carrier to leave the package with a neighbor, or you can pick up the package from the carrier. We are starting to see reports of larcenies of packages left outside a home or on a porch. For extended absences, as a safeguard, go to USPS.COM and place a hold on your mail.

REMEMBER, OPPORTUNITY MAKES THE THIEF