

## **Becoming a Theft Victim**

### Burglar Protection

Approximately 2.5 million burglaries occur every year, mainly during the summer and holiday months. The easiest way to protect you from burglars is to take preventative measures.

### Going on Vacation

Before going on vacation, contact your newspaper and arrange to put a stop or vacation hold on your daily delivery, or ask a neighbor to collect your newspapers for you. Ask the Post Office to hold your mail to keep it from accumulating. Piles of unchecked mail and unread newspapers are a green light to burglars looking for easy targets.

A timer, which turns lamps and lighting on and off at set times, is inexpensive and available at most major retail outlets. Simply plug it in and set your lighting scheme. In addition to conserving energy, you don't have to keep the lights on constantly; the lights may fool burglars into thinking someone is at home.

Make your home look occupied. Ask your neighbors to park in your driveway, and to pick up flyers or deliveries left on your porch. Be sure to leave a phone number where they and/or the police can reach you.

### At Home

Invest in motion detector lights for your back yard and garage. Look for lights that allow you to set the sensitivity (the light is of little use if passing leaves set it off) and place them where maximum light will reach entry points, such as a back door or car doors.

Keep all windows and doors locked when you're home as well as when you're at work or away. Be sure to keep valuable items, like your purse, or car keys away from unlocked doors. Similarly, avoid placing spare keys outside, especially anywhere near the door. If someone needs a spare key, make other arrangements, such as leaving a key with a neighbor. Invest in a deadbolt for every outer door. Deadbolt locks are the hardest to break and one of the cheapest security investments you can make.

Consider investing in an alarm system if you are truly concerned about safety, particularly if you live in a high crime area, or if homes in your neighborhood have been recently victimized. Keep in mind, however, that even with alarm systems, you still need to take common-sense precautions to protect your home.

Finally, make sure your homeowner's or renter's insurance is current and your home inventory is up-to-date and safely stored away. A good spot for your inventory list as well as other important and valuable papers is a fireproof safe or a plastic pouch in your freezer. You don't have to spend a ton of money to have a good security setup. All it takes is a little bit of time and caution.

Thank you,

Constable Ken Jones

