

Burglaries

What can be done to prevent burglaries in our neighborhood?

Burglaries in our neighborhoods are for the most part crimes of opportunity. Most burglars work in neighborhoods where they find garage doors open or partly open, houses that have several days of mail in the mailbox and newspapers that have not been picked up for days or where houses have been watched routinely to see the homeowners movements and home and work schedules. The later is why it is important in the evening to pull your shades or curtains, so not to allow someone watching for the opportunity to see the makeup of the inside of your house and your movements. We are seeing a good part of our residential burglaries committed during the daylight hours. They kick a door or break a window to gain entry after checking to see if anyone is home. Usually they will knock on the door, and if someone comes to the door, they will ask for a fictitious name and act as if they are at the wrong residence. When this happens, you should call law enforcement and report a suspicious person, and we can send a unit to check the person out if they linger in the area. Prevention is the key to keeping down the odds that you or your neighbor will become a victim. Below is a list of things you can do to help cut down the chances that you will become a victim:



1. Have good lighting around your house and property.
2. It is very important that you keep all doors and windows (including garage door) locked when you are home and away.
3. When the sun goes down, pull your window shades or curtains, so that no one outside can see inside your residence (you or your furnishings)
4. Don't leave your garage door open so everyone can see what you have inside i.e. riding lawn mower, tools and equipment.
5. Report to law enforcement any strangers hanging around the neighborhood.
6. Have metal or solid core wood doors for all entrances to your house.
7. Have full throw dead bolt locks on all entrance doors with secondary locking devices on all your windows that open. (This is in case the thief breaks a window and reaches in to unlock it, he will have to spend more time searching for the secondary locking pin or latch to open it.)
8. A good dog that barks when someone comes on the property is a good investment and the cheapest insurance you can get.
9. Know your neighbors, the type of vehicles they drive, and the hours they are usually home. If you see anything out of the ordinary, call the Constable or Sheriff's office and ask for a patrol check.
10. Starting a neighborhood crime watch is one of the best first lines of defense in preventing burglaries or detecting strange people or vehicles in your neighborhood.
11. Call in a vacation watch on your home when you are going to be away, so we can help keep an eye on your home while you are away.
12. I don't recommend the recording on your phone saying such things as, "You have reached the Jones' residence. I'm sorry we are away from the phone", or even the ones that say, "You have reached 281-427-4792." We don't need to furnish any

additional information to strangers. I would suggest leaving a message like, "Hello, our telephone is hooked to our computer line and when on the computer, we cannot answer the phone, so please leave a message and we will return your call when we are through." O.K., it may not be true, but they don't know if it is or not, and it could make a difference if the thief was calling around to get a home with no one there.

These are just a few of the things you can do to help in making your home a safer place and not a prime target for a thief. If you would like additional information, please give my staff or me a call. By all means, please take advantage of our vacation checks and never hesitate to ask for a police car to check by your residence or neighborhood if you see someone that looks suspicious. Our 24-hour number is 281-427-4791.

Thank you,

Constable Ken Jones