

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY PREVENTION INFORMATION

Most burglars will spend no longer than 60 seconds trying to break into a home and most entries occur during daylight hours after parents have gone to work and students are in school. Good locks -- and good neighbors who watch out for each other -- are the most effective deterrents to burglars. Please review the following burglary prevention information or call the Police Department at 286-5460 and have an officer visit your home.

CHECK THE LOCKS

Did you know that in almost half of all completed residential burglaries thieves entered through unlocked doors or crawled through unlocked windows?

- Make sure every external door has a sturdy, well-installed dead bolt lock. Key-in-the-knob locks alone are not enough.
- Sliding glass doors can offer easy access if they are not properly secured. You can secure them by installing commercially available locks or putting a broomstick or dowel in the inside track to jam the door. To prevent the door being lifted off the track, drill a hole through the sliding door frame and the fixed frame. Then insert a pin in the hole.
- Lock double-hung windows with key locks or "pin" windows by drilling a small hole into a 44° angle between the inner and outer frames, and then insert a nail that can be removed. Secure basement windows with grilles or grates.
- Instead of hiding keys around the outside of your home, give an extra key to a neighbor you trust.
- When you move into a new house or apartment, rekey the locks.

CHECK THE DOORS

- A lock on a flimsy door is about as effective as locking your car door but leaving the window down.
- All outside doors should be metal or solid wood.
- If your doors don't fit tightly in their frames, install weather stripping around them.
- Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in all entry doors so you can see who is outside without opening the door. Door chains break easily and don't keep out intruders.

CHECK THE OUTSIDE

Look at your house from the outside. Make sure you know the following tips:

- Thieves hate bright lights. Install outside lights and keep them on at night.
- Keep your yard clean. Prune back shrubbery so it doesn't hide doors or windows.
- Cut back tree limbs that a thief could use to climb to an upper-level window.
- Clearly display your house number so police and other emergency vehicles can find your home quickly.
- If you travel, create the illusion that you're at home by getting some timers that will turn lights on and off in different areas of your house throughout the evening. Lights burning 24 hours a day signal an empty house.
- Leave shades, blinds, and curtains in normal positions. And don't let your mail pile up! Call the post office to stop delivery or have a neighbor pick it up.

- Make a list of your valuables -- VCRs, stereos, computers, jewelry. Take photos of the items, list their serial numbers and descriptions. Check with law enforcement about engraving your valuables through Operation Identification.
- Ask local law enforcement for a free home security survey.

CONSIDER AN ALARM

Alarms can be a good investment, especially if you have many valuables in your home, or live in an isolated area or one with a history of break-ins.

- Check with several companies before you buy so you can decide what level of security fits your needs. Do business with an established company and check references before signing a contract.
- Some less expensive options...a sound- detecting socket that plugs into a light fixture and makes the light flash when it detects certain noises, motion sensing outdoor lights that turn on when someone approaches, or lights with photo cells that turn on when it's dark and off when it's light.