



# Security tips for the holidays



## Credit Cards

- Credit cards are as good as cash and clerks rarely check identification. Most credit card companies hold the owner responsible for all purchases until the card is reported lost. To prevent credit card loss:
  - Keep your credit cards in a safe place.
  - Report any losses immediately.
  - Take only the cards you will need for shopping.
  - Check your credit card statements for accuracy.
  - Keep a record of your credit cards and phone numbers to call if they're lost or stolen.

## Deliveries

- Do not give criminals an easy opportunity.
- Schedule deliveries for times when you are at home.
- Make arrangements to have your parcels delivered to a neighbor if you are unable to be at home.
- If you live in a multi-unit building, bring packages left outside for your neighbors into a secured area.

## Cash

- The tendency to carry large amounts of cash is greater during the holidays. If you must carry cash: Take only the amount you plan to spend when shopping.
- Keep all money in a safe place – never leave your purse or wallet unattended or out of your sight/immediate control.
- Avoid flashing your money in public.
- Stay aware of who is near you at ATMs or cash registers

**For questions – Please contact your Crime Prevention Specialist.**

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## Home security during the holidays

- Many people keep their gifts out for days during the holidays. Homes are also more vulnerable, given the time spent away from home shopping or visiting. Don't display what you have.
- Close the blinds/curtains at night or while you're away.
- Garage locks are usually the weakest locks you have. Avoid hiding presents in the garage. A second-story closet or attic offers you safer storage.
- Break up boxes, especially for purchases like TVs. Bundle inside out and only put out to your collection point on the pick up day. Don't advertise what you have.
- A holiday light display (inside or outside) shows ownership and increases the overall lighting in the area.

## Transporting gifts in your car

- Never leave gifts unattended or in the back seat of your car. This invites opportunity for a thief to break into your vehicle.
- Always lock your car. Lock all purchases in the trunk.
- Pick up major items at the end rather than the beginning of a shopping trip.
- Immediately remove all purchases from your car when you return home.

## Holiday scams

- Know your charities and retailers.
- **Fake charities:** If you're asked for a donation, verify the legitimacy of the charity before giving.
- **Gift cards:** Only purchase gift cards from trusted retail outlets. Make sure gift cards have not been tampered with before purchasing.
- **Scam emails and online shopping:** Shop only at trusted retail sites. Do not respond to unsolicited emails or click on their links.

**Please enjoy a safe and happy holiday season!**