

Protect Your Home This Holiday Season And Throughout The Year

The following tips can make your home more secure:

- . To reduce the chance of easy entry, cut tree limbs away from second-story windows.
- . Secure objects such as ladders or trashcans that could be used to enter a window or scale a fence.
- . To prevent hiding places for intruders, trim bushes to expose branch structure.
- . To illuminate entries, install motion lights.
- . Install easy-to-read and illuminated address numbers so emergency personnel can easily locate your home.
- . Be aware of usual and unusual neighborhood behavior.
- . Secure all windows, including those upstairs.
- . Never leave a key hidden outside. Burglars know all the best hiding places.
- . Install peepholes and ask to see identification from service and delivery people.
- . Install dead bolt locks on exterior entrances.
- . Avoid displaying gifts where they can easily be seen through windows. Take care when disposing of product packaging so you aren't "advertising" recent, high-dollar purchases.

Follow these steps to help your home appear occupied:

- . Use timers to operate lights.
- . Turn your telephone ringer down so no one outside can hear repeated rings. Review your answering machine message to make sure it does not imply you are away.
- . Arrange for continuing yard care.
- . Ask a friend to pick up deliveries or have deliveries stopped.
- . If your car is parked in the driveway, have a friend move it occasionally.
- . Also, keep the doors locked and do not store garage door openers in vehicles parked outside of a secured garage.

If your home is protected by a security system from a reputable company, you should:

- . Ask your alarm provider about wireless backup or Web-enabled security in the event your phone line fails or is tampered with and so that you can receive convenient alerts via your cell phone or other PDA.
- . Test your system monthly.
- . Help prevent false alarms by providing instructions on the operation of your system to houseguests and avoid placing moving ornaments or decorations, such as balloons, in the path of motion detectors.

When leaving for vacation or long weekends, inform the East Coventry Township Police Department advising the departure/return dates, emergency contact, and other relevant information.

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