

Preventing Crimes of Opportunity

Compiled by: Samantha Nolan, Washington, DC, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

- The Police Department is working hard to prevent crime. There are things that you can do to prevent crime too.
- Keep all doors and windows locked. If you have an alarm, activate it. If you don't have an alarm, get one if you can.
- Never leave keys in doors near glass. Hang spare keys out of reach from doors and windows.
- Never leave strollers, bikes, lawn mowers, tools, sporting equipment or any other valuable items sitting unattended around your home.
- Never leave your purse: in the cart at the supermarket or department store; on the floor next to your chair; hanging from the back of your chair, or on the chair next to you in restaurants or on public transportation; or in an unattended desk at work.
- Never leave laptops, purses, keys, cameras or other valuable items next to a door or visible from a window.
- Never leave valuables visible in your car. If you must leave them in your car unattended, place them in the trunk before you reach your destination.
- Display your address prominently on the front and rear of your house near the door. This could save your life during a medical emergency!
- Do not leave exterior lights on during day, but do leave them on all night. Put lights on a timer. Put inside lights on timers when away.
- Install a peephole in your front door, and do not open the door to strangers. Add dead-bolt locks to all doors.
- If the subject line of an email reads:
Dell Tracking - Addressing must meet FedEx standards
And it is From: .Delivery Confirmation, Do not open it - unless you know you are expecting a package. It is an infection that can damage your computer. If you do open the email, it sends a delivery confirmation back to the sender. The sender can then have access to your computer.
- NEVER give your Social Security Number, Medicare number, Birth date, bank account number or pin number to anyone who asks for it on-line or on the phone. A Bank will never ask you to do so. This is a scam!

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- Never send money to someone who claims to be traveling and without money. This is a scam!
- I-phone, I-pad and I-pod are prized by robbers. If they see it, they will want it. Do not show them out in public.
- Wear only one ear bud when listening to music or messages so you can still hear what is going on around you. Pay attention to your surroundings.
- When visiting an ATM, be sure to look around for anyone watching you. Stand close to the screen when putting in your pin number to block others from seeing your number. Make sure to remove your card when you are finished with your transaction. Try to go to the ATM inside the bank, or during the daylight hours, and not at night.
- Never count money in public. Don't carry large sums of money with you while walking on the street.
- Have your car VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) etched to prevent auto theft. Watch for notices of VIN etching events in your community.
- Get to know all of your neighbors, so that you can recognize those who don't belong on the block, and Form a buddy system with a neighbor to take in mail and papers while you are away. Report burnt-out streetlights to 311.
- If you witness a burglary or other crime in progress, call 911 and report "Crime in Progress." Write down everything you see and keep notes in a safe place. Read your notes to the 911 operators.
- Do not leave your purse or valuable visible in your car while pumping gas. Lock your car door while pumping gas.
- Become a block captain and help protect your neighbors.