

# Safety Tips

## **THEFT**

In case of theft, your chances of recovery are increased if your property is marked. The majority of stolen items recovered by police cannot be identified and returned to owners. Burglars do not like property that is marked because it is hard to sell.

- Record serial numbers and descriptions of your possessions.
- Use an electric engraving pencil to engrave an identification number on your possessions.

Complete a home inventory of your personal belongings along with a videotape or photograph of each item of value.

## **OPENING YOUR DOORS TO STRANGERS**

### ***You don't ever have to open the door!***

1. Peepholes . . . to see who's there -- Wide-angle peepholes are a highly recommended viewing device because the person outside does not know that you see him/her. If the peephole is being covered, do not open the door.
2. Chain locks a false sense of safety -- They are not recommended because they are mounted with short screws and have weak chains.
3. Door wedges really work -- A door wedge is a better alternative when you wish to open your door only a few inches to speak to a stranger. This device is useful for children and women who are alone at home. It can be found in most hardware stores.

## **VEHICLE THEFT**

Never leave your keys in the ignition or leave the car running, even for a moment. Estimates indicate that 80% of all stolen vehicles were left unlocked, and 40% had keys in the ignition. Some auto thieves hang around convenience stores and gas stations.

Car alarms are excellent for deterring thieves.

Park in a well-lit, busy area. This is for your personal safety as well as your car's.

Do not leave ANYTHING visible in the passenger compartment of your car when parking. Lock all items in the trunk prior to arriving at your destination

## **PROTECTING YOUR SECURITY *On Foot***

- Stay in well lighted, busy areas. Avoid walking alone and avoid known trouble spots.
- When you carry a purse, hold it close to your body rather than by the handles. Do not wrap purse straps around your wrist, because you can get hurt in a struggle.
- Carry only what you need in a purse or wallet, not everything you have.
- Avoid using shortcuts through dark alleys, fields, or vacant lots.
- If you think you're being followed, cross the street and change directions a few times. Go quickly to a well-lighted place with lots of people. Do not go home. You don't want an attacker to know where you live.

## **PROTECTING YOUR SECURITY *On Wheels***

- Keep your car in good running condition
- Always roll up the windows and lock car doors

- Avoid parking in isolated areas. Be especially alert in lots and underground parking garages
- Don't pick up hitchhikers
- If you think someone is following you, don't head home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, gas station, or other open business to get help

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT**

- Use initials instead of first names on mail boxes and phone listings.
- Avoid remaining alone in an apartment laundry room or parking garage.
- Never admit on the telephone or at the door that you are alone.
- It is risky to accept a ride home from someone you have just met.
- If you decide to physically resist assault, remember that your goal is to incapacitate the attacker long enough to run to safety and get help.
- If you have been a victim of sexual assault, call police immediately. Do not bathe or change clothes or you may destroy valuable evidence.

## **ROBBERY**

Avoid carrying valuable items or large amounts of money. Always think ahead. For example, when traveling at night, have your keys ready to enter the house or to start the car. If a robber confronts you, the best advice is to cooperate. If you resist, there is a greater chance that you may be hurt.

## **BANK MACHINES**

When using an automatic bank teller, always be watchful of any suspicious people around you. The chances of being robbed at night are much greater, especially if you are alone. If you find someone waiting and watching outside in the area of an ATM machine, do not use it. Leave the area and report the incident to the Police immediately. You could save someone else from being a victim of crime.

If possible, use ATM machines located in well-populated grocery stores or gas filling stations to reduce your risk of becoming a victim.