

Holiday Safety and Crime Prevention Tips

Courtesy of Sonoma State University Police and Safety Services (Ph. 707-664-4444)

Parking Lot Safety Tips for Holiday Shoppers

Lock your vehicle and hide valuables and packages, preferably in the trunk or locked compartment. Before sunrise and after sunset, park and walk in well-lit areas and carry keys in your hand. Remain alert to your surroundings and take a moment to glance around for possible suspicious persons, vehicles and/or situations.

When Shopping, Remain Alert to Your Surroundings

When in crowded places, be alert for potential thieves. Don't overload yourself with packages. Maintain visibility and mobility to avoid potential threats. Be wary of strangers approaching you directly for any reason. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry. Don't leave personal belongings unattended. Shop with friends or relatives and ensure everyone looks out for each other.

Tips for Holiday Shopping With Children

Keep a close eye on children at all times. Consider coaching them to go to a store clerk or security guard if they become separated and be sure they know their first and last name so they can advise someone who they are. Give children a contact phone number that they can carry on their person in case they do become lost.

Keeping Your Home Safe During the Holidays

Be extra cautious about locking windows, sliders, and doors when leaving for any length of time. Consider keeping all entrance points into your house secured while you're at home as well. Set indoor and outdoor lights on timers and think about doing the same with an indoor radio to make it appear as if someone is home. Never keep gifts or valuable objects in plain view from any window. Close blinds, shutters, drapes and curtains because if a burglar can see gifts or valuables they may attempt to take them from you. If a person knocks at your door and you don't recognize them, don't feel obligated to open your door. Teach your children that by no means will they open the door to anyone prior to your knowledge and authorization.

When Celebrating the Holidays, Celebrate Responsibility

Many people celebrate the holiday season by attending holiday parties with family and friends. Enjoy these gatherings responsibly so this time of joy does not become a time of tragedy. Don't drink and drive. Identify a designated sober driver or utilize vehicle for hire services (Taxi cab or other service).

Notify your local law enforcement agency to report a crime, suspicious person/circumstance. Dial 9-1-1 to report an emergency.

Finally, enjoy the holiday season!

