



## Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH IS ALWAYS ON THE JOB!

EMERGENCY - 911

### Important Numbers

Non-Emergency  
703-777-1021  
703-777-0445

Poison Control  
1-800-222-1222

Animal Control  
703-777-0406

Narcotic Tip Line  
703-779-0552

Crime Solvers  
703-777-1919

Administration  
703-777-0407

Traffic Hotline  
703-771-5798

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## Fall Home Security Check-Up

We are entering the season when we will begin to store our summer wares and look toward the coming cool temperatures and changing leaves. To help you prepare for the coming season we would like to give you some helpful tips as you prepare for the changing weather.

- Exterior lights are stressed by cooler temperatures. Check all of the exterior light fixtures for failed bulbs.
- Seasonal plantings may need to be trimmed back or removed in order to maintain that kept up appearance that deters burglars.
- As we move things to the shed, ensure you are securing the shed with a dependable lock. (Don't forget the quick shot of WD40 into the lock to prevent freezing.)
- If storing items in the garage, ensure they are secure and will not fall. Loose items can fall against garage door tracks and prevent them from closing correctly.
- With the cooler weather, many homeowners will have windows open enjoying the cool night breezes. Be sure to close and lock those windows when you are not at home. Even a short trip within the neighborhood could be the opportunity a burglar is looking for.
- Do a quick check and make sure your address numbers are still visible. Summer growth may have covered them and now is a good time to trim plantings back so those numbers are visible to emergency responders.
- As the weather gets colder doors and window frames will shrink. Be sure to check that locks are still working properly. If in doubt, call one of the LCSO Crime Prevention Specialist for a [Home Security Inspection](#).

**Remember:**

**When in doubt, have us check it out.**

**703-777-1021**



### Holiday Burglary Prevention

As we begin to enter the holiday time of year we must keep in mind that criminals are still around and will take advantage of any opportunity..... [See Page 3](#)



### Package and Parcel Theft

Another common crime during this time of year is the theft of delivered packages and parcels. This crime occurs often and can easily be perpetrated..... [See Page 2](#)

 **FACEBOOK:**  
[www.facebook.com/loudounsheriff](http://www.facebook.com/loudounsheriff)

 **TWITTER:**  
<http://twitter.com/loudounsheriff>

Please LIKE us on FACEBOOK and follow us on TWITTER!

## Package and Parcel Theft

Another common crime during this time of year is the theft of delivered packages and parcels. This crime can easily be perpetrated and can be hard to prosecute unless the offender is caught in the act. To combat this type of crime, consider doing the following:

- If possible make arrangements to pick up packages at a package store or postal service facility.
- If they must be delivered, ask that packages be left on a back porch or set beside the front porch. This prevents them from being visible from the roadway.
- Request a specific delivery time.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to watch for the delivery and have them take it to their house until you get home.
- If you are expecting a package and it does not arrive as scheduled, follow-up with the carrier immediately.
- Be extra vigilant in your neighborhood. If you keep seeing that same vehicle circling the block or same person wandering through the neighborhood, call it in immediately! When in doubt, have us check it out.

## Theft from Vehicles

The theft of electronics, monies, and others items of value from vehicles is a problem in every corner of the county.

With the holidays just ahead, you can be sure thieves will be out looking for those new electronics left behind in vehicles.

Here are a few reminders to keep your new items safe:

- Never leave any electronic items visible in your vehicle. Almost any electronic item has value.
- Taking items inside is the best bet. Even if someone searches through your car your item will still be safe.
- Remove cords when you remove your devices. Cords identify what devices you may have. Thieves use this information to come back later and see if you left it behind.

If you see anything suspicious  
**CALL IT IN!**

You are the eyes and ears for your community.

**Non-Emergency:  
703-777-1021**



## Scams and Fraud

There have been a number of scams and frauds that have been taking place throughout Loudoun County. In many of these cases the perpetrators pose as law enforcement or government officials and inform the victim that they owe some type of fine or are wanted and that paying monies will keep them from being arrested. These perpetrators can be very convincing and use high pressure tactics to intimidate the victim into paying the monies. The perpetrators may even provide legitimate phone numbers for the agencies they represent but will provide a different number for you to call once you have the Greendot Card or other prepaid card.

In many of these cases the perpetrators convince the victim to "load" money onto a Greendot prepaid money card.

The perpetrators will then ask the



victim to give them the card information so they can complete the payment.

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office recommends that if you receive such a call, do not complete the transaction and please report it immediately.

For more information:

[www.sheriff.loudoun.gov/moneycard](http://www.sheriff.loudoun.gov/moneycard)

## Holiday Crime Prevention

As we begin to enter the holiday time of year, we must keep in mind that criminals are still around and will take advantage of any opportunity to commit their crimes.

Criminals, especially burglars, rely on our predictable behavior to ensure the success of their crime. This behavior can put us at risk and even increase our chances of being victimized. To help prepare citizens for the holiday season here are some tips for the community that relate specifically to Burglary Prevention.

- Unsecured windows are an easy target for burglars. Do not run lighting cords or extension cords through any window you cannot 100% secure.
- Burglars will watch holiday related trash for indications of what gifts may have been received. Cut up all boxes and packaging with identifying panels and bag them in dark colored trash bags.
- Don't give burglars the chance to dumpster dive. Wait until the morning of trash pick-up to set your trash out.
- Place your holiday lighting on timers so they go on and off on their own. A sure sign that no one is home are holiday lights turned off when they would normally be turned on.

- Try to keep gift boxes out of sight. If a burglar can see the gifts around the tree, it may be just the opportunity they are looking for.
- If you are going to be traveling during the holidays, be sure to let a trusted neighbor know. Leave a contact number with them just in case something happens, so you can be contacted.
- Do not leave gifts locked in your car. Your car is more easily broken into than your home. Find a good hiding place in your home and use it.
- Remember, after the holidays, to document the make, model, and serial number for any electronics or other expensive gifts. Look for information about [Operation Inventory](#) on our website.
- Gifts without serial numbers should be photographed and a detailed description kept with other valuable documents.
- With new electronics comes new hazards. DO NOT leave that new GPS or Smartphone in your vehicle overnight. You can be sure that criminals will be out after the holidays looking to cash in on someone else's gifts.
- Lastly, your knowledge of your community is your most valued tool. If something or someone appears out of place, call the Sheriff's Office and let us check it out.



## Halloween Safety

- S** Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.
- H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. Always WALK and don't run from house to house.
- A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation.
- L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.
- L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- O** Only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.
- E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult.
- N** Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.