

Home Tips:

- Leave lights on when not at home.
- Put lights/TV/radio on a timer to give the appearance that the home is occupied.
- Advise a neighbor if you are planning to be away for an extended period of time. Request that they watch the home until you return.
- Use the home alarm system, if so equipped.
- Do not place gifts where they can be viewed from windows/doors.
- Do not put Christmas gifts out until it is close to Christmas Day.
- Secure valuables/jewelry/ cash when entertaining.
- Shred credit card receipts and/or any papers containing personal information.
- On rubbish day, break down boxes from gifts/purchases and tie them with the labels facing in. Do not advertise what is in your home.
- Do not let anyone into your home unless they are there by appointment. Ask for credentials and/or a phone number to call if someone comes to your home and claims to be from a utility company, home improvement company, mortgage company, etc. Most legitimate companies do not solicit door to door. They do business by appointment. Consult a family member/attorney before signing contracts.
- Do not let anyone talk you into coming out of your house to look at repairs they feel need to be done. While you are outside with this person, other person(s) may enter and rob your house.
- Keep your house locked while outside doing yard work, sunbathing, etc. Burglars will enter your house while you are outside. One will stay out and be the lookout and they communicate with cell phones.
- Do not allow anyone to enter your house to use the phone. Offer to call someone for them or offer to call the police for assistance.
- When selling items, insist on cash payment. Do not take personal checks. Money orders can be altered to show an amount greater than the value of the money order. Do not take a check/money order for an amount greater than the sale price of the item. Con artists will do this and ask you to give them back the difference in cash. The check will then turn out to be bogus and you will lose not only the item, but also the cash. If you must take a check, ask for identification, a phone number, and write down the buyer's license plate number.
- Call police immediately if you become suspicious. Attempt to get a vehicle description and direction of travel. Provide a good description

on suspect(s). For example; height, weight, clothing, hair color, facial hair, tattoos, scars, speech accent, etc.

- Do not be fooled by correspondence claiming that you have won a prize and need to send money to collect your winnings. Legitimate lotteries/sweepstakes/contests do not require any pre-paid fees. If you have not signed up to win any lotteries/sweepstakes/contests, you can not be a winner.
- Do not get fooled by letters asking you to deposit money or open accounts in your name. These letters generally are from foreign countries and will ask you to give the sender your account number and/or personal information in order to deposit some check(s). Once they have this information, they will empty your accounts.
- Do not donate to solicited charities. Choose legitimate charities you wish to donate to and stay with those charities.
- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it is. Predators attempt to deceive you by gaining your trust or promising you things that do not exist, such as cash, gifts, vacation packages, etc. Use common sense.