

IOWA CITY CITIZEN SECURITY GUIDEBOOK

**A Household and Neighborhood Security Handbook
Provided by the Iowa City Police Department**



Produced by the Iowa City Police Department
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Crime Prevention
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240

Important Numbers

Emergency/ Urgency.....911
(Police, Fire, Ambulance)

Iowa City Police
24 hour non-emergency.....356-6800
Crime Prevention.....356-5273

University of Iowa Hospitals
Poison Control Center.....800-222-1222
Emergency Treatment Center.....356-2233
General Information.....356-1616

Mercy Hospital
Emergency Room.....339-3600
General Information.....339-0300

Emergency Weather Information *
Johnson County Civil Defense
(During Local Weather Emergency Only).....356-6028
Department of Public Safety
(State Road Conditions).....(515) 288-1047

Miscellaneous Services
Salvation Army.....351-5800
Iowa City Crisis Center.....351-2726
Domestic Violence Program.....351-1043

Child's Physician.....

Family Physician.....

Other Important Numbers:

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*Neither weather emergency agency listed offers weather forecasts.

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BURGLARY

Burglary is one of the greatest crime problems Iowa City faces. An average of **342** (2002-08') residential and business burglaries occur annually, resulting in substantial amounts of stolen and damaged property. Statistics indicate that despite doubling the annual burglary charges filed by the Iowa City Police Department in the last 20 years and reducing the annual number of burglaries, your chance of becoming a victim of burglary is still great.

The Iowa City Police Department believes that many crimes can be prevented. We can't guarantee your home will never be broken into, but we believe simple steps can be taken to reduce the likelihood of a burglary occurring to your home.

Fighting crime takes teamwork, and a winning team needs an effective game plan.

The team is comprised of you, your concerned neighbors, and your police department; and the crime prevention information offered in this handbook provides a practical, proactive game plan.

With you - **and ONLY with you** – the fight against crime can be won!



TEAMWORK

CONFRONTING THE MYTH:

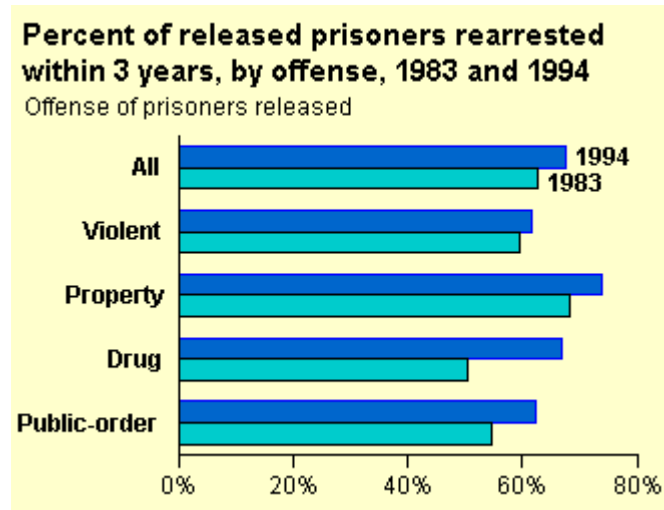
....."If the police would just work harder to get the criminals off the street, we wouldn't have a crime problem."



WRONG!

The old notion that arresting criminals will “get them off the street” is, in a sense, a grand myth. Consider the following recidivism study, provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics:

In a 15 State study, over two-thirds of released prisoners were rearrested within three years



Two studies come closest to providing "national" recidivism rates for the United States. One tracked 108,580 State prisoners released from prison in 11 States in 1983. The other tracked 272,111 prisoners released from prison in 15 States in 1994. The prisoners tracked in these studies represent two-thirds of all the prisoners released in the United States for that year.

Rearrest within 3 years

- 67.5% of prisoners released in 1994 were rearrested within 3 years, an increase over the 62.5% found for those released in 1983
- The rearrest rate for property offenders, drug offenders, and public-order offenders increased significantly from 1983 to 1994. During that time, the rearrest rate increased:
 - from 68.1% to 73.8% for property offenders
 - from 50.4% to 66.7% for drug offenders
 - from 54.6% to 62.2% for public-order offenders
- The rearrest rate for violent offenders remained relatively stable (59.6% in 1983 compared to 61.7% in 1994).

Reconviction within 3 years

- Overall, reconviction rates did not change significantly from 1983 to 1994. Among, prisoners released in 1983, 46.8% were reconvicted within 3 years compared to 46.9% among those released in 1994. From 1983 to 1994, reconviction rates remained stable for released:
 - violent offenders (41.9% and 39.9%, respectively)
 - property offenders (53.0% and 53.4%)
 - public-order offenders (41.5% and 42.0%)
- Among drug offenders, the rate of reconviction increased significantly, going from 35.3% in 1983 to 47.0% in 1994.

Returned to prison within 3 years

- The 1994 recidivism study estimated that within 3 years, 51.8% of prisoners released during the year were back in prison either because of a new crime for which they received another prison sentence, or because of a technical violation of their parole. This rate was not calculated in the 1983 study.

IMPORTANT BASICS FO PREVENTING CRIME

We don't have to be criminologists to be effective at preventing crime, but we should understand the general basics of crime, and our ability to control potential risk.

The Three Aspects of Crime

There are at least three components in every crime. Without any one of these three, the crime simply will not take place:

The **DESIRE** of the criminal to commit the crime;
The **ABILITY** of the criminal to commit the crime; and
The **OPPORTUNITY** of the criminal to commit the crime.



With regard to burglary, simply put, both the **desire** and the **ability** of the burglar are areas that are out of your control as a potential victim.

Crime is the result of the **DESIRE** or wish to commit a crime, the **ABILITY** or knowledge to commit the crime, and the **OPPORTUNITY** to commit the crime.

DESIRE + ABILITY + OPPORTUNITY = CRIME

On the other hand, you have to have *everything* to do with the **opportunity** of the criminal. You control the amount of opportunity provided (or not provided) to the would-be criminal contemplating burglarizing your home.

How easy would it be for you to break into your own home? How quickly could you get in? How quietly could you get in? Now imagine how easily, quickly, and quietly a skilled and experienced burglar could do the same.

Controlling Opportunity

Consciously or unconsciously, the burglar attempting to enter your home has three questions constantly going through his mind: “How much noise am I making?”, “How much time am I taking?”, and “Am I being watched?”

Controlling the NOISE, TIME, and SURVEILLANCE of a potential burglary is, in effect, controlling the opportunity of the criminal.

For example, a burglar will spend a limited amount of time on the outside of your home attempting intrusion. If he hasn’t gotten in during that time, he will most likely leave to seek an easier target. (The average burglar will allow himself only **one minute** attempting to gain entry before giving up!)

There is also only so much noise a burglar will allow himself to create during an intrusion attempt for fear your neighbors may hear and report the suspicious noises. And if entrances and windows are free of obstructions to the view from your neighbor’s homes, and well lit at night, the burglar will generally decrease the amount of time and noise that he otherwise would allow himself in the attempted intrusion.

No home can be completely impenetrable. Given adequate level of skill, the security of *any* door, window, or lock can be defeated by the intruder. Our goal, then, is to increase the amount of NOISE and TIME necessary to force entry, and to increase the potential for SURVEILLANCE of areas vulnerable to intrusion. To the degree this is accomplished, the opportunity for burglary is decreased, and crime becomes much less likely.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

By increasing the physical security of your home, you increase the amount of force necessary to break in. The more force needed, the more time intrusion would take, and the more noise it would generate. The more time and noise involved, the more likely a burglar would be to choose a different target.

Door Security

Door security involves the lock, the construction of the door, the door jamb, and the door setting. Each of these is vitally important to overall door security.



Figure 1



Figure 2

The lock

If you can lock an outside door by pushing in a doorknob button and closing the door (fig. 1), burglars can open it quickly and quietly with a flat, firm object, or by a variety of more sophisticated methods. The latches of these types of locks are generally short, and therefore, also susceptible to kick attacks. If not accompanied by a quality deadbolt lock, the key-in-knob lock alone is not considered adequate to provide sufficient residential security.

The “vertical bolt” (sometimes referred to as a “rim-lock”) can be very effective (fig. 2). As with any style of lock, lower quality vertical bolt locks should be avoided. To be effective, the vertical bolt lock must be bolted through the door, rather than merely affixed with standard wood screws.

We recommend the deadbolt style lock for most home security applications. A quality deadbolt will have at least a 1” bolt extension and be of sturdy construction. There are two basic types of deadbolt locks*: single cylinder and double cylinder (fig. 3 and fig. 4).



Figure 3



Figure 4

The single cylinder deadbolt requires a key to lock or unlock the door from the outside, but has a thumb turn lever on the inside. The double cylinder deadbolt requires a key to lock or unlock from either side of the door. If using a double cylinder deadbolt lock, it is essential to leave the key in the inside keyhole WHENEVER the home is occupied as a means of quick exit in an emergency. With regard to fire safety, the **only** double cylinder deadbolt we recommend is one which is equipped with a safety feature which does not permit the removal of the key from the inside keyhole if the deadbolt is locked from within.

Door Construction

A lock can provide only as much security as the door holding it in place.

Wooden “hollow-core” doors are weak, and provide little, if any, security. Only minimal force is necessary to collapse hollow-core doors, regardless of the style or quality of the lock. We strongly recommend the replacement of any hollow core exterior doors.

Most metal-cased doors provide far more resistance to force, and are preferable to hollow-core doors. However, many metal-case doors contain one or two seams along the edge of the door where the lock is in place. This seam may allow the door to crack and separate along the lock area if violent force such as a kick is applied to the door by an intruder. The splitting of the door in this region may permit the lock, regardless of the quality of the lock, to twist in such a fashion as to allow the opening of the door. Nonetheless, metal-cased doors are generally a great step up in security over wooden hollow-core doors.

* See the Door Setting section for the applications of these two types of deadbolts

Solid-core wooden doors generally provide reasonable security. However, considering that even solid-core doors are hollowed out near the lock and doorknob area (for installation of the deadbolt and knob), the added weakness may allow the door to crack and split near the lock if considerable force is applied from the outside. But by reinforcing the solid-core door (fig. 5), this problem is easily taken care of.

Figure 5

The Door Jamb

Even the best deadbolt lock, attached to the most sturdy of reinforced solid core doors, will not remain secure when attacked if the strike plate is not designed and installed for optimum security. The most common door vulnerability is in this area, but is often overlooked.

There are many varieties of strike plates that are designed for greater security. Hardware stores and locksmiths are good sources for information concerning the many options available (fig. 6).

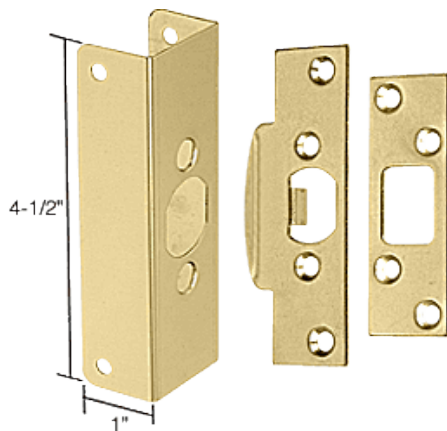


Figure 6

Regardless of the chosen style, it is *essential* that the strike plate be installed with very long screws (At least 3" long) that extend *beyond* the molding and into the wall stud hidden behind the wall.

Door Setting

Panes of
the lock
the
the glass
the door.



glass within 40" of
may provide burglars
opportunity to break
and reach in to unlock

One option to safeguard against this type of intrusion is to replace these standard glass panes with break-resistant panes. (Glass companies offer a variety of alternatives to standard glass.) However, glass substitutes are usually costly and often have other disadvantages in appearance or care difficulties. The double cylinder deadbolt lock (mentioned earlier) is a good method to use in these cases. See the following protective film trick:

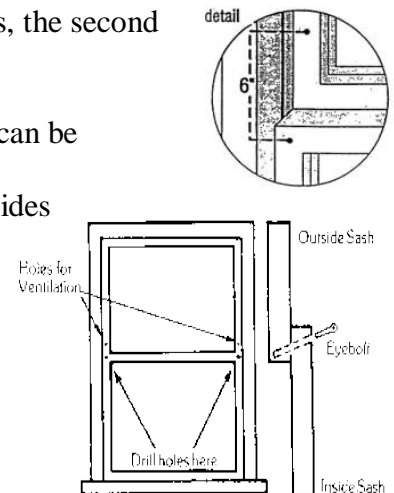
Protective Films- A polyester film (4 mils or thicker, with a scratch resistant surface) designed to be applied to the inner surface of any smooth glass. Special adhesives provide increased energy dissipation ability and resistance, thereby increasing the strength of the original glass by approximately 300%.

Window Security

Although the back door is the first choice of entry for most burglars, the second preference is generally a basement or ground floor window.

The latches on standard vertically or horizontally sliding windows can be quickly defeated by many burglars. "Pinning" these windows provides effective, simple security, and can be done easily:

1. Drill a hole (about 1/6" in diameter) at a slightly downward angle through the inside window frame and about 3/4 into the outside frame.
2. Insert a loosely fitting pin or nail into the hole (see fig. 7)



Simply remove the pin to "unlock" the window, and reinsert it to lock it. Also, by repeating this procedure with the window *opened* about 4" to 5", you can now "lock" the window partially open; wide enough to allow the free flow of air, yet not wide enough to allow an intruder the opportunity to crawl through.



When locked, cranking casement style windows are reasonably secure. But when unlocked, they can be pried open from the outside. In addition, the panes of unlocked casement windows have been broken from the outside and simply cranked open by a burglar reaching in. Keeping these windows locked usually provides reasonable security, but for extra security, you may choose to remove the crank (however, remember to keep it available nearby for quick use in an emergency).

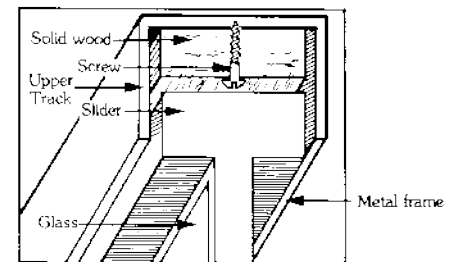
The small basement “well windows” have been accessed by burglars also. They are difficult to secure, but many hardware stores and locksmiths can provide the information and/or equipment needed to adequately reinforce these windows.

Sliding Glass Door Security

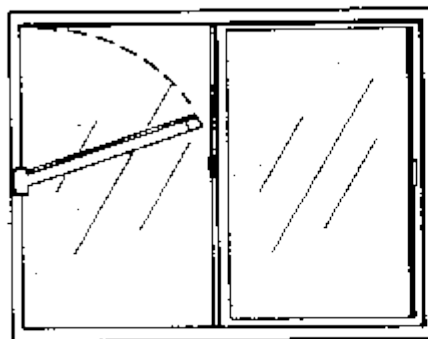
The sliding glass door poses an intrusion risk if not properly secured. Rarely will a burglar risk the noise made by the breaking of the glass of a sliding glass door. But often these doors are equipped with relatively weak locks, and may be vulnerable to being either forced open or lifted off their tracks and removed. Their security can be enhanced by a combination of the following:

1. Drilling and pinning the overlapping frames (see fig. 8 and fig. 9);
2. The use of a “Charlie-bar” (see fig. 9)

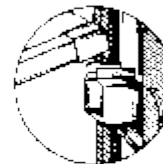
Figure 8



Upper Track of Sliding Glass Door



Charlie Bar



Retaining bracket

Figure 9

3. Simply placing a stick or bar snugly into the bottom track;
4. The installation of a supplemental lock system (available in several varieties at many hardware stores and locksmiths).

Burglar Alarms

We know that burglars prefer to make as little noise as possible, and often abandon the intrusion attempt if they feel they have made too much noise trying to enter. If the noise caused by forced entry frightens some burglars off before intrusion has been successful, you can imagine the effect of the louder noises caused *indirectly* by the burglar.



"Psst, Mister — how'd you like
to buy a brand-new burglar
alarm for half price?"

A barking dog, for example, can be an effective “alarm.” We are limited only by our own imagination. Some put sleigh bells on the back doors; others have propped metal tools against infrequently used doors into the garage, so that they will fall and clang loudly onto the floor when the door is opened. Some parts of the military actually use **geese**, whose honking at suspicious persons is presumably more reliable than the barking of dogs!

There are many different types of burglar alarms, offering different types of protection. But as far as reliability is concerned, most electronic intrusion detection systems can be greatly effective. If properly installed according to actual need, and if utilized at all times the home is vacant, burglar alarms are always beneficial. This is not to say that every home *needs* a burglar alarm. In many cases physical security and proper lighting might be sufficient, thus the added expense of an alarm system may be difficult to justify. On the other hand, there are three circumstances for which the use of a burglar alarm is highly recommended. These revolve around the questions of *distance*, *vacancy*, and *vulnerability*.

If the *distance* between your home and neighboring homes is so great that the noises of a forced intrusion attempt (breaking glass, the kicking of a door, etc.) would probably not be heard from a neighbor's home, or so great that view to your home from a neighboring home is not possible, then a burglar alarm system is highly recommended.

Or, if your home is *vacant* frequently or for long periods of time due to travel, a burglar alarm is also highly recommended.

We also suggest consideration of an alarm system if there are unusual door or window configurations that make higher security difficult or impossible; and thus leave these potential entrances *vulnerable* to relatively quick or quiet access.

If you decide to install an alarm system in your home, you will find that you have many options from a variety of companies. For instance, you can choose between a "do-it-yourself" system, or one that is professionally installed. You can choose to alarm the entire home, or limit the system only to the most vulnerable areas. You can go with one that links fire and smoke detection into the system, or merely detects intrusion. You will also get to choose from a wide selection of sensor types—from motion sensors to pressure mats hidden beneath the rug. You can determine for yourself what will work best in your home based on your informed concerns and your means.

But there is one strong recommendation we *will* make. Remember that your home contains your most prized possessions; yourself and your family members. Burglars rarely try to intrude while there is someone home, but that possibility still exists; or that you or a family member return home while the burglar is present. For unoccupied businesses, silent alarms that alert the police department, or an alarm company that contacts the police, are a good idea. In these cases the burglar may not realize an alarm has been activated until he is caught in the act. Our chances at apprehension and conviction are greater.

But your home is quite different than an unoccupied business. In every residential case, the *audible* alarm is preferred over any silent system. It's a fact that apprehension chances are reduced immensely if an audible alarm sounds during a burglary. The burglar will flee and usually will be far away by the time officers are notified and arrive. Don't be concerned about that. We'll deal with the burglar on another occasion. For the

moment, protect yourself and others in the home by causing the burglar to flee. In this regard, the louder the alarm system the better!

Here are some points to remember once the system is installed:

1. Make sure neighbors are aware of the alarm system, and instructed to call 911 *immediately, whenever* they hear the alarm.
2. Be sure that in the event the alarm sounds in your absence, the police department or an available neighbor knows who to contact to reset the alarm, as well as how you can be reached quickly.
3. Promptly correct any problem that has led to “false alarms.”
4. Check the system frequently to detect potential malfunctions.
5. Utilize the system whenever the home is vacant.

Keeping Areas Open to View

As we discussed earlier, one of the fears a burglar experiences is the fear of being seen. Burglars rely heavily on seclusion, and often this seclusion could be removed beforehand by the resident. We create greater opportunity for the burglar when we create potential seclusion for him. Likewise, when we reduce potential seclusion we simultaneously reduce the opportunity for burglary.



Houses with connecting garages, darkened entryways, or thick shrubbery that obscures the view around basement or ground floor windows, can pose security difficulties. These difficulties can be overcome....

Shrubbery

Large bushes, or thick trees with low hanging branches, can create seclusion opportunities for burglars if they are located where they block view to windows. Burglars can use thick shrubbery to hide behind while attempting to defeat the security of a basement or ground floor window. By allowing thick foliage to grow near accessible windows, a situation is created that gives the burglar no need to rush his entry. While every burglar will spend a finite amount of time attempting intrusion before giving up, that time can be greatly lengthened when the burglar is aware that he is not in view from a neighbor's residence, or by traffic on the street and sidewalk.

Removal of any such obstruction to view is highly recommended.

Garages

Remember that the first choice of intrusion for burglars is the rear door. But it is important to note that "rear door" simply means "most secluded door." Realizing the desire of the intruder to enter through an entrance not open to public view, every effort should be taken to ensure that all entrances leading into the garage from the outside are as secure as possible.

The reason for this is simple. If there is a pass-door between your garage and house, access into your garage really means access into your house. Once inside your garage, a burglar has available to him all tools within the garage. Many of these tools are very capable of assisting with forced entry through virtually any household lock or door. And again, he is secluded from view from your neighbors, and will usually allow himself much more time.

Another thing to remember about the garage, whether connected to the house or not, is that any clear windows should be covered or "frosted." Window coverings disallow burglars the opportunity to peer in and determine the presence or absence of cars.

To keep the garage secure:

1. Turn off the electric garage door opener and manually lock the overhead door when leaving town for an extended period. (Tip: consider drilling a hole in the door track, and applying a paddle lock to the hole, while gone).

2. The walk-in doors of the garage (leading from the outside into the garage) should be every bit as secure as any other door leading into your home. (See Door Security.)
3. Windows of the garage should have curtains, shades, or other window coverings to obscure view from outside.
4. Garage windows should be as secure as possible. (See Window Security)

Exterior Lighting

Exterior lighting is often underestimated in its security enhancement potential, and therefore, often underused.

The fact of the matter is that a good lighting system can be every bit as important to security as a good lock system. Burglaries don't always occur at night, but very often do. And when they do, it's usually because the burglar prefers the cover of darkness. The last thing the burglar wants is to be seen, so removing his cover through proper lighting techniques can actually keep most burglars away from your home.

Remember that burglars prefer rear or side entrances, so limiting lighting to the front of the home is not the best idea. Regardless of the lighting system you use, attention should be given to **every** entry.

There are many exterior lighting options available to you. One option is to effectively use existing standard porch lighting. Entryway lights are often sufficient to light vulnerable areas of the home. Simply leaving these lights on throughout the night is a very good idea. Brightness is important, but low wattage bulbs generally last longer, are inexpensive to use, and usually provide enough light to help motivate a burglar to try a darker target. Getting into the habit of leaving them on *every* night, even while the home is occupied, is a good idea. If these lights are on only in your absence, you may be signaling to the burglar that the home is empty. Also, remember that porch lights left on through the day can be a signal of an empty house. If leaving town, arrange to have them turned on at night, and off in the morning.

"Photo sensors" are convenient and can be added to existing lights very easily. They operate the lights for you, sensing the change from daylight to darkness and turning the lights on and off without your aid.

Another alternative is the replacement of standard light switches regulating exterior lights with timed switches. You simply determine at what time you want the exterior lights to come on and go off, and set the time accordingly. Both photo sensor lights and timed switches provide the advantage of functioning normally even in your absence.

For many applications, motion detector lights are often the best alternative regarding security lighting. Motion detectors sense the presence of movement and respond by

immediately switching the lights on. They turn themselves off after a period of time predetermined by the user. The potential burglar realizes one of two things as the light comes on: either someone has seen or heard him and turned on the light; or, he realized the light is a motion detector light, and is aware that the radical change from darkness to light may have been noticed by someone who will soon be looking to determine the cause. In either case, the intruder is likely to leave the area immediately.

Whichever you decide to use, a good lighting system can enhance the security of your home. Everything else being equal, a burglar will choose a home with darkened entrances over a well-lit home.



REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

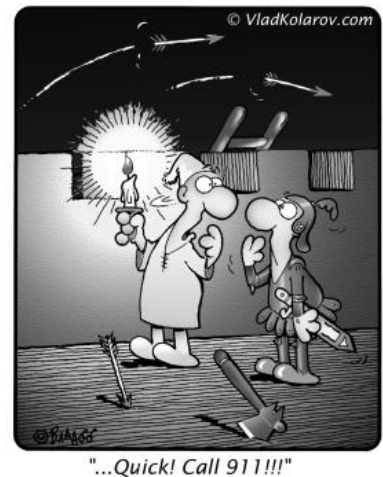
We Need You!

After many residential burglaries, neighbors have informed us that they heard or saw something suspicious at the time of the burglary, or shortly before. Perhaps someone was lingering between houses, an unfamiliar vehicle passed by very slowly several times at a peculiar hour, breaking glass or a loud crashing sound was heard, or there was continuous barking of a neighbor's dog. It's probable that as many of 50% of our burglaries would have never taken place had we been informed immediately when suspicious activity was noticed.

There are as many explanations why the police are *not* called as there are reasons *to* call:

- "I didn't want to bother the police."
- "I wasn't absolutely sure that a crime was actually occurring."
- "I didn't want to look foolish if nothing was really wrong."
- "I might have just imagined that noise."
- "If it's really a problem, someone else will call."
- "I didn't want to get involved."
- "The police will think I'm just paranoid."

If you have ever thought anything like this while contemplating calling the police, you are among many! But the truth of the matter is that we *need* to hear from you to respond.



Anything that occurs in your neighborhood which *seems* suspicious to you is, in fact, suspicious. It doesn't matter whether anyone else, including the police department, perceives it the same way. Because it's *your* neighborhood, no one is better qualified to determine what is suspicious around your neighbors' homes than you are. If you don't call, it's likely that no one will. And if no one calls, we don't come. We want your call. We **need** your call!

Reporting to the Police



Use **911** in any emergency or urgent situation. If you are unsure whether a particular situation warrants the use of 911 or the non-emergency police number, use 911.

If you have a programmable phone, it's a good idea to program both 911 and the non-emergency police number (356-5275) into the phone for quick access.

Emergency 911 Procedure

Give the 911 operator your name, address, telephone number, and a brief description of what you actually see and hear. The operator will ask questions to learn additional details necessary to emergency response, or immediately transfer your call to another emergency agency if needed. If you have information you feel could be pertinent but haven't been asked about it, give those details as well. Be specific, and don not exaggerate the circumstances.

Stay on the line until instructed otherwise by the 911 operator. It is not necessary for you to hang up before the police can be dispatched, and if you can stay on the line while still monitoring the suspicious individual, you can be the "eyes" of our department during the initial stages of your response.

Describing Suspects

We realize that descriptions are often difficult, and especially at night. But the more accurate detail we have, the more efficient our response can be.

Here is a list of details that can be very helpful to us in describing individuals:

- Sex
- Race
- Age
- Height
- Weight
- Hair Color
- Hair Length
- Clothing
- Facial Hair
- Tattoos/Scars
- Accents or Speech Impediments
- Items Being Carried
- Present Location
- Mode of Transportation
- Direction of Travel



Describing Vehicles

Vehicle description can be just as difficult as suspect descriptions, but are likewise very important to us. The more accurate the detail we have, the more efficient we can be.

When describing vehicles to us, consider the following:

- License plate (number *and* state of issue or color)
- Vehicle Color
- Make
- Year
- Style (2-door, convertible, etc.)
- Body Damage
- Cracked or Broken Windows/Mirrors
- Direction of Travel
- Number of Occupants
- Description of Occupants



Vacation Pointers



Over 95% of all burglaries occur at a time when the burglar presumes the home is unoccupied. One common technique is for the burglar to find a home that appears unoccupied, and verify this by knocking on the door just prior to burglarizing it. Given this, a prolonged vacationer should consider arranging to have a live-in house sitter occupy the home in his or her absence. Of all the methods to make your home *appear* occupied, nothing is better than having it *actually* occupied.

Without a house sitter, the vacationer should consider the following suggestions:

- Make sure that deliveries do not accumulate, but **do not** cancel these deliveries. (Canceling deliveries announces your absence to a variety of individuals.) Instead, arrange to have a neighbor promptly pick up all deliveries in your absence while keeping an eye on your house.
- Secure all windows and doors to the greatest extent possible, and activate any alarm system in place.
- Place interior lights on timers on a schedule consistent with your usual schedule.
- Arrange for a neighbor to turn on exterior lights at night, and off in the morning; or utilize one of the light systems discussed in the Exterior Lighting section.
- Arrange for snow removal, lawn mowing, and other general maintenance. It's also a good idea to have a neighbor leave a container of trash by the curb in front of your home on trash pick-up day.

- Arrange to have the drapery opened in the morning, and closed at night.
- Have your call forwarded by the phone company to a neighbor, and instruct this neighbor not to advertise your absence to callers.
- Make sure fellow employees answering the phone at your workplace are instructed not to offer any information about your absence, or when you are expected to return.
- Move small items of great value (jewelry, coins, etc.) to a safety deposit box.
- Move items that would typically be stolen by a burglar to uncommon places in the home (easily pawned items such as handguns, jewelry, coin, stamp, or coin collections, audio or video equipment, silver or other precious metal items, etc.).
- If you are a dog owner, when feasible you should arrange for a friend or neighbor to care for the dog at your home, rather than placing it in a kennel away from your home.
- Notify the police department and request our house watch service, and leave information with a trusted neighbor regarding how you can be reached.



"I've a nasty feeling we've
had burglars..."

OTHER PRACTICAL IDEAS

Install and use a peephole if view to the outside is not already possible from just within your door.

Don't open the door for strangers. If they need emergency assistance, **you** make the call for them rather than allowing them in to use the phone.

Require identification of salesmen, repairmen, etc.

Don't give information to strangers about your neighbors.

Don't keep expensive items in plain view. Keep them out of sight when not in use. And don't advertise new gifts or purchases. Instead, break up marked cartons before leaving them at the curb for removal.

If you return home and see indications of forced entry, or indications of attempted force entry, leave immediately without entering. If you have already entered and then discover the intrusion, quickly leave without touching anything. Call the police promptly from a neighbor's house.

Make sure your house numbers are a distinctly different color than the surface of the house, and are large enough to allow clear visibility from the street. They should be well lit after dark for nighttime visibility.

Even when leaving the house for short periods of time, make sure the house does not appear obviously unoccupied. (E.g., never leave notes on the door, or leave the overhead garage door open, etc.)

Never leave keys hidden outside the home.

Lock your windows and doors when working outside or in a secluded part of the house.

Keep all tools and ladders in places which are inaccessible to potential burglars.

Have your phone number and address clearly posted on or near the phone for quick use by guests or babysitters.

Never attach an identification tag to your key ring.

Whenever you move into a new home, or whenever your house key is lost, either replace the locks or have a trusted locksmith re-key the locks.

KEEPING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GOING

Active participation by Neighborhood Watch members is necessary to an effective program. It's easy to be motivated to watch for and report suspicious activity when there's a current rash of burglaries near your neighborhood. But when crime decreases, we have to remember that at any time a new burglar may become active, or a former burglar released from the corrections system might forget that he's been rehabilitated.

Here are a few projects that are helpful in maintaining communication, interest, and involvement by Neighborhood Watch members. Choose the ones you like and offer to help your Neighborhood Watch captain with the work!

- Create a map/phone list of your Neighborhood Watch and provide a copy to each member. This will help when reporting suspicious activity to the police, and staying in touch with one another. (Encourage members to keep the list where strangers will not have access to it.)
- Develop a "phone tree" to allow easy dissemination of information through the entire Neighborhood Watch.
- Notify your block captain after reporting suspicious activity in the neighborhood. The more your neighbors are aware of problems in the neighborhood, the more alert they will be to similar situations.
- Have an annual block party or picnic involving the entire neighborhood. The more time neighbors spend together and the stronger the relationships, the easier it is to continue sincere interest in watching out for one another.
- Offer to host the next Neighborhood Watch meeting. We suggest that each neighborhood have at least yearly review/update security meetings with a Crime Prevention Officer.
- Encourage your neighbors to maintain a reasonably high level of physical security to their homes and garages. Occasionally review this manual's security sections, and implement all that is practical for you.

