

# HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

The holiday season is a wonderfully magical time of year. With all the colorful holiday lights, joyful music, sounds of laughter and feelings of good will, it's easy to forget that we may become a victim of a crime. Falling victim to crime can happen to anyone at anytime. While there are no guarantees, that you won't be a victim of crime, there are things you can do to avoid being an easy target. The following suggestions are offered to assist you or your family:

## AT HOME

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave home, even for a few minutes. Make sure all doors close easily and lock securely.
- When leaving home for an extended time, ask a family member or trusted neighbor to watch your house, pick up your newspaper and mail, and accept any deliveries.
- Indoor and outdoor lights and a radio should be left operated by an automatic timer so your home looks and sounds occupied when you are away.
- Home displays of holiday gifts should not be visible through the windows or doors.
- Engrave all personal property with your California Drivers License or California ID number. Photograph or videotape the items you cannot engrave. An engraver is available from OPD by calling (510) 986-2715.

## DRIVING

- Do not leave packages or any other items in plain view on the seat of your car.
- Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.
- Assess the surroundings when arriving at any location, and be aware of the surroundings when leaving or approaching your car.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.
- As much as possible and practical, avoid driving alone at night.
- Make sure all doors and windows are closed and locked while in or out of your car.
- If you must stop while driving at night, park in a well-lighted area.
- Make sure your car is in good operating condition and the gas tank is full.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells or cars with tinted windows that prevent you from seeing inside.
- At night, when walking between cars in parking lots, be cautious when passing a vehicle with someone sitting inside or with open sliding side doors of a van.

## SCAMS

- Criminals try to take advantage of your good will during the holiday season. Your trust in others can make you vulnerable to scams.
- Be wary of aggressive solicitors or panhandlers at your front door and NEVER invite them into your home.
- Consider posting a "NO SOLICITING" sign that is visible to anyone approaching your door. Legitimately licensed solicitors should not bother you. All others should be considered unscrupulous and in violation of the law.
- Do not give or verify personal or financial information about you or anyone else over the phone to anyone you don't know personally.
- Do not dial any phone number for anyone who telephones wanting to "check your line."

- Do not give permission to being put on any list for donations or give out your credit card number. If you wish to donate, mail your donation directly to recognized charitable organizations.
- Donate directly by mail to recognized charitable organizations.
- Say NO to anyone representing “charitable organizations” who wants cash and is willing to come to your home to pick up the “donation.”

## **HOME PARTY**

- Inform your neighbors of your plans for a holiday party and apologize in advance for any inconvenience the party may cause. Invite them to the party.
- If your neighbor cannot attend, be considerate; don't let the music get too loud and plan to end the party at a reasonable time.
- Before guests arrive, remove items of value from the rooms where the party will be held. Secure your valuables in a locked room. (It may be necessary for you to replace some existing locks or install deadbolt locks on some interior doors.)
- Consider providing only non-alcoholic beverages for your guests.
- If alcohol is to be served, arrange for a designated driver that will not drink any alcohol and will be available to transport those who may need a ride home.
- If you host a party where alcohol is being served and children or persons under 21 years old are present, **DO NOT PERMIT THEM TO CONSUME ANY ALCOHOL.**
- Be wary of “party crashers”. Calmly ask them to leave. If they refuse, do not become aggressive. Remain calm. Call the police non-emergency # immediately at (510) 777-3333.

Adapted from material created by the LAPD Crime Prevention Section @  
[www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org)  
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**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!**