

Holiday Crime – Awareness & Prevention Tips

With the holidays upon us, and the busy holiday shopping season officially kicking off with “Black Friday”, many of us inevitably find our lives a bit more hectic as we do our holiday shopping. Traditionally during the holiday season we see an increase in burglaries, thefts from inside vehicles, auto thefts, and identity theft. Summit Security wants to remind you to add safety to your shopping list.

Did you know that studies show on average?

- 75% of all thefts and burglaries are a result of people leaving their valuables in plain sight.
- 50% of all vehicle thefts and burglaries reported are a result of people leaving their cars unlocked.
- 40% of all stolen vehicles had the keys left in them.
- 50% of burglary and theft victims subsequently become victims of identity theft.

While these statistics are alarming, they often increase during the holiday season as the malls, stores, and parking lots become more crowded. It is important to remember that criminals have a choice of where they commit crimes. The vast majority of all theft related crimes are often “crimes of opportunity”. Perpetrators tend to look for the "easiest" target and prey upon those who leave themselves, or their property, vulnerable. The good news is there are numerous crime prevention measures you can take to avoid becoming a victim.

Make Your Community a More Difficult Target for Criminals:

- ✓ Ensure your employees are easily identifiable. This is especially important with maintenance staff. Often, burglars, seen using tools to enter apartments, are mistaken for maintenance staff by residents and visitors.
- ✓ Have community rules and enforce them. For example, if residents are not allowed to loiter in parking areas then perpetrators in the community will be more noticeable.
- ✓ Review your physical security systems. This can include cameras, locks on common area entrances, and other security equipment. Make sure cameras are in working order, and that there are enough cameras to cover all common areas.
- ✓ Review all lighting on the property to make people less vulnerable.
- ✓ Have all landscaping cut back to enhance lighting and visibility.
- ✓ Make sure outside gates are locked leading to common areas inside.
- ✓ Educate your residents by sharing crime prevention tips and making them aware of possible security measures.
- ✓ Offer inexpensive tools to your residents that will reinforce security awareness such as whistles or a wooden dowel for sliding glass doors/windows.
- ✓ Schedule extra patrols of the community during evening hours. This can be accomplished by a request to your security provider, local law enforcement or working with the members of your neighborhood watch.
- ✓ Schedule a trash pickup immediately after Christmas to get rid of boxes that illustrate valuables inside people’s home or apartment.

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We hope you find these tips helpful. On behalf of our entire team at Summit Security, we wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.