

## Senior Safety Tips

### **DON'T BE A VICTIM THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!**

The holiday season is a time of celebration. It can also be a time when busy people become careless and susceptible to theft and other holiday crimes. Fraud and violence against senior citizens is particularly concerning. The following tips can help reduce your risk of being a victim this holiday season.

#### **Be Alert When Out and About:**

- Go with friends or family, not alone.
- Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- Don't carry credit cards you don't need or large amount of cash.
- If someone or something makes you uneasy, trust your instincts and leave.
- Whether you're a passenger or driver, keep doors locked.
- Have your car or house keys in hand as you approach your vehicle or home.

#### **Watch Out For Con Artists :**

- Don't fall for anything that sounds too good to be true – a free vacation, sweepstakes prizes, cures for cancer or arthritis, cheap home repairs, or low risk/high yield investment schemes.
- Never give your credit card, Social Security, or bank account number to anyone over the phone. Remember - it's illegal for telemarketers to ask for these numbers to verify a prize or gift.
- Don't let anyone rush you into signing anything – an insurance policy, a sales agreement, or contract. Read it carefully and have someone you trust check it over.
- Use direct deposit for Social Security and other regular checks.

#### **Holiday Shopping Tips :**

- Don't display large amounts of cash in stores or other public places.
- Never put your purse or wallet on a counter or in a shopping cart while you examine merchandise in a store.
- Park in well-lighted and busy areas, preferably near an entrance.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages that obstruct your view and make it hard to react.
- Store all items in the trunk and lock your vehicle.
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and when you expect to return.

#### **Safety at Home :**

- Be mindful of potential scams designed to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays.
- Keep doors and windows locked at all times.
- Place lights, radio, and television on timers so that your home appears occupied.
- Avoid having displays of gifts visible from windows and doors.
- When you leave your home for extended holiday travel, have a neighbor or friend watch your home while you're away. Have them collect your mail and newspapers while you're gone. Also, complete a Vacation Check Form for the Police and Citizens on Patrol to make checks by your home.

**FACT:** Seniors are more vulnerable to certain crimes – purse snatchings, assaults, and frauds.

**HOW TO ACT:** You can reduce opportunities for criminals to strike by being careful, alert, and a good neighbor.

For more Senior Citizen or Holiday Safety Tips contact Officer Doug Sisk at (972) 780-5027 or [dsisk@duncanvillepd.com](mailto:dsisk@duncanvillepd.com).

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