



# **CRIME PREVENTION**

## **TIPS:**



## **HOLIDAY SAFETY**

**Tis the season to be giving, not to be taken. This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers and pickpockets a better chance to do their work. It's an opportune time for crime.**

**Homes packed with extraordinary gifts. Stores, malls and downtown streets gleaming with unsuspecting shoppers. People rushing around, stressed out and careless, looking for last-minute gifts, trying to get everything done. It's enough to make a crook's holiday a special one.**

**There are many things you can do to reduce the risk of becoming a holiday victim.**

### **SHOPPING**

- **Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.**
- **Park in a well-lit space, and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk.**
- **Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.**
- **Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Don't overburden yourself with packages. Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.**
- **Shopping with kids? Teach them to go to a store clerk, security guard or police officer if you get separated.**

### **HOME SECURITY**

- **Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it looks like someone's home. Use automatic timers if necessary.**
- **Avoid leaving Holiday Decorations, Christmas Candles, Christmas Tree Lights and Menorahs on unattended.**
- **Make sure all the windows and doors are locked.**
- **Don't display gifts where they can be seen from outside.**
- **Pick up the mail and newspapers.**
- **Have a trusted neighbor watch your home, shovel the snow, and park in the driveway from time to time.**

## **PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM TELEPHONE FRAUD**

**It's not always easy to spot con-artists. They invade your home through telephone calls, mailers, newspapers and magazines. They use persuasive and aggressive tactics to get you to donate to their cause, purchase their items and invest into their scams.**

**Con artists steal billions of dollars each year from all types of unsuspecting people.**

**Remember if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.**

### **PROTECTING YOURSELF**

- **Never give a caller your credit card, phone card, Social Security number, or bank account over the phone. It's illegal for telemarketers to ask for these numbers to verify a prize or gift.**
- **Listen carefully to the name of a charity requesting money. Fraudulent charities often use names that sound like a reputable, well-known organization such as the American Cancer Association (instead of the American Cancer Society). Ask for a financial report before you donate; a reputable charity will always send you one. Ask for a phone number and contact person.**
- **Beware of 900 numbers. People who call 900 numbers to request instant credit often end up with a booklet on how to establish credit cards. Such**

calls can end up costing \$ 50 or more, but consumers rarely end up obtaining credit.

- Investigate before you invest. Never make an investment with a stranger over the phone. Beware of promises that include the terms “get rich quick”, or once in a lifetime opportunity.”
- Instruct the telemarketers to remove your name and telephone from their list.
- For further information call the National Fraud Information Center at 800-876-7060, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST. or send an (e-mail) to the Fraud Watch home page on the World Wide Web at [http:// www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org).

*Happy Holidays from the Greenburgh Police  
Department  
Crime Prevention Unit!*

**914-682-5334**

**P.O. Peter Dandreano**

**[pdandreano@greenburghny.com](mailto:pdandreano@greenburghny.com)**