



Safety Tips

This holiday season should be a time of great joy as we celebrate and share with those close to us. Unfortunately, it can be a time when crime becomes more prevalent. The St. Louis County Police Department offers these “Holiday Safety Tips” to help make your holiday season a safe and happy one. Please take some time to read them and share them with your family and friends.

Be Discreet:

- Never carry large amounts of money. Whenever possible, use credit cards or debit cards instead of cash. When using credit cards, make sure that only one credit slip is printed with your charge card. Also, be sure to keep track of all transactions and destroy any carbon copies. Credit card fraud can ruin your holiday season.
- Do not withdraw large amounts of money from the bank at one time, especially ATMs. When you go to the bank or ATM, try to go during daylight hours.

Be Alert:

- Walk confidently, with your head up, and stay in well-lighted and well-traveled areas.
- Pay attention when you are in crowded areas - places with large crowds are favorites for thieves and pickpockets.
- If you carry a purse, keep it in front of you and close to your body. Keep your purse with you at all times.
- Never leave your purse in a shopping cart or on a counter while you pay for your purchases.
- When using public washrooms, use extreme caution. Try to avoid putting your purse on hooks or door handles. Remember – do not to carry open-weave bags or purses without zippers.
- Keys should not be carried in the purse when possible. In the event of a purse snatching, the thief will have your address and keys to your home.
- Gentlemen, carry your wallet in your front pants pocket or inside breast pocket of your coat.
- Avoid shopping alone - shop with family or friends if possible.
- Shop during the daytime, when possible.
- Be on the lookout for con-artists – people offering something for nothing.
- Beware of giving your credit card number over the phone.

Secure Your Car and Home:

- Park your car as close to your destination as possible and in well-lighted areas.
- Keep your car locked and keep valuables completely out of sight.
- When you are shopping, remember to store your packages in the trunk of the car and not in the back seat. Also, if you are taking packages to the car but plan to return shopping, drive to a new location within the parking lot. Criminals can be on the lookout for unsuspecting shoppers who simply drop their purchases into the trunk and then return to keep shopping.
- Do not leave any items in your car overnight (Garmin, radar detector, phone, etc.)
- Keep your hands free and avoid carrying an excessive number of packages. Have your keys in hand and be ready to open the door as soon as you leave the store.
- Scan the areas surrounding your vehicle both when you park and when you return to your

vehicle. If you do not feel comfortable with any suspicious persons in the parking lot, do NOT go to your car. Notify the security for the business and if none are available, notify the police department.

- Visually check the front and back seats of your vehicle before opening the door and getting in. Lock your doors immediately after entering the vehicle.
- Take extra steps to secure your home. Do not leave gifts by doors or windows where they can be seen by thieves.

**Immediately report suspicious persons and activities to police.
St. Louis County Police Department (314) 889-2341**

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