



Village of Skokie

December 14, 2011

For Immediate Release **Public Information Division**

Skokie Police Department - Holiday Safety Tips

Homes are jam-packed with glittering gifts. Stores, malls and shopping districts are filled with shoppers enjoying the holiday season. While searching for the perfect gift for a friend or family member it's important to remember a few useful safety precautions during this festive time of year. Here are some tips to help you have a safe holiday season:

If you are traveling:

- Use an automatic timer on lights in your home.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home while you are away.
- Don't forget to have your mail and newspaper delivery stopped. If it piles up, it's a sure sign that you are not home.

If you are out for the evening:

- Turn on a few lights and the radio or TV so it appears that somebody is home.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave, even if it is just for a few minutes.
- Do not display wrapped gifts where they are visible from outside of the house.
- Never allow yourself to be distracted when opening your purse or wallet and keep cash in your front pocket.

If you are shopping:

- Stay alert and be aware of what is going on in your surrounding area.
- Park in well-lit spaces and secure your vehicle. Never leave shopping bags visible from outside of your car.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card.
- Be aware of holiday scammers who attempt to reach inside your coat or purse while you are shopping or dining in a restaurant.
- Never carry your keys in your purse. If you are the victim of a purse snatching, the offenders have your identification with your address on it, along with your keys. Keep your keys in your pocket.
- Transfer all valuables to the trunk of your vehicle.

If a stranger comes to your door:

Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. Periodically, people try to take advantage of others' generosity during the holidays. Always ask to view an identification card. Avoid opening your door until doing so.

If you feel uncomfortable, or if you are concerned or suspicious of the person or group at your door, please call 9-1-1.

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