

LAPD SAFETY TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Driving and Shopping

- Avoid driving alone or at night.
- Keep all car doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm or use an anti-theft device.
- **If you must shop at night, park in a well-lighted area.**
- **Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells, or cars with tinted windows.**
- Park as close as you can to your destination and take notice of where you parked.
- **Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.**
- **Do not leave packages or valuables on the seat of your car. This creates a temptation for thieves. If you must leave something in the car, lock it in the trunk or put it out of sight.**
- Be sure to locate your keys prior to going to your car.
- Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door.
- When approaching or leaving your vehicle, be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.
- **If you must use an ATM, choose one that is located inside a police station, mall, or well-lighted location. Withdraw only the amount of cash you need.**
- **Protect your PIN by shielding the ATM keypad from anyone who is standing near you.**
- **Do not throw your ATM receipt away at the ATM location.**
- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member.

- Dress casually and comfortably.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible.
- Always carry your California Driver License or Identification Card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.
- Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- Keep cash in your front pocket.
- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, on buses and other rapid transit.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- **Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, “con-artists” may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.**

Children

- If possible, leave small children at home with a trusted babysitter.
- **Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case your child is separated from you.**
- Teach children to stay close to you at all times while shopping.
- **Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom.**
- Children should never be allowed to go to the car alone and they should never be left alone in the car.

- **Teach children their full name, address and telephone number to give to police officers or mail security. Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.**

At Home

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even for a few minutes.
- **When leaving home for an extended time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail.**
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be on an automatic timer.
- Leave a radio or television on so the house looks and sounds occupied.
- **Large displays of holiday gifts should not be visible through the windows and doors of your home.**
- When setting up a Christmas tree or other holiday display, make sure doors and passageways are clear inside your home.
- **Be sure your Christmas tree is mounted on a sturdy base so children, elderly persons or family pets cannot pull it over on themselves.**
- **If you use lights on your Christmas tree ensure the wiring is not damaged or frayed. Frayed or damaged wiring can cause a fire.**
- **Place your Christmas tree in water or wet sand to keep it green.**

Operation Identification

- The goal of Operation Identification is to deter property-related crime and to assist the Los Angeles Police Department in their efforts to find and return stolen or lost property to its rightful owner. Remember the following:
 - Mark gifts with your California Driver License or Identification Card number.
 - Do not use your Social Security Number.
 - For items that cannot be marked with an engraver, photograph or videotape the items.

Strangers at Your Door

- Be aware that criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts.
- It is not uncommon for criminals to take advantage of the generosity of people during the holiday season by soliciting donations door-to-door for charitable causes although no charity is involved.
- Ask for their identification, and find out how the donated funds will be used. If you are not satisfied, do not donate.
- Donate to a recognized charitable organization.

Hosting a Party

- **Have non-alcoholic beverages available for party guests.**
- **Find alternative transportation for intoxicated guests.**
- **Arrange for an official designated driver for your party who will not drink at all.**

Attending a Party

- Have something to eat before consuming alcoholic beverages.
- Eat high protein foods that will stay in your stomach longer and slow the absorption of alcohol into your system.
- Remember only time will eliminate the alcohol from your body.
- Know your safe limit.
- **Never drink and drive.**