

Holiday Crime Prevention



Watch to Watch Out For:

- Car Break-Ins or Thefts
- Pickpockets & Stolen Purses
- Robberies (strong-arm or weapons)
 - Credit Card Thefts
- On-Line Scams (bad checks, stolen merchandise)
 - Burglaries and break-ins
 - Assaults & Hate Crimes

Car Break-Ins

- Thefts from autos are the most common crime. Thieves watch for items in plain view. A “smash and grab” takes just seconds, resulting in an expensive broken window and missing gifts.
- Have nothing visible through the windows—even an empty bag or sweater, can tempt a break-in. Even avoid having loose change around.
- Keep packages in the trunk. If you place your items in the trunk and plan to continue shopping, please move your vehicle. Thieves will watch for this.
- Remove your GPS receiver and try to not leave suction cup marks on your windshield. These are a good indicator that there is something valuable inside of the car.
- Watch for broken glass as break-ins

Robberies

Most robbers want your stuff and don't want to hurt you unless you fight back. In addition to adrenaline, they may also be on drugs.

- Give them what they want.
- Only fight back if they appear intent on injuring you.
- Watch out for weapons such as guns or knives.

Pick Pockets and Stolen Purses

How to avoid having your money, credit cards or identity stolen:

- Carry wallet in your front pocket and your purse under your arm, not hanging on strap. Avoid having your purse around your body. Thieves may try to pull your purse away from you and can cause serious injury.
- Keep ID separate from credit cards and never carry your Social Security card.
- Record credit card numbers and immediately notify police and issuer of card.

- Be extra vigilant in crowds, such as when riding public transportation or when watching performers.

Assault

- If someone intends to cause harm, get away as quickly as possible.
- Don't separate from the crowd—especially after the bars close.
- Fight back—use keys or pepper spray as self-defense items.
- Make noise—blow a whistle or scream to attract attention.
- Run at your first chance—don't try to “get even”.

Victim or Witness: Be Observant,

Call 911

- As a witness, keep a safe distance. Describe assailants to the 911 dispatcher: (i.e. the # of people who were involved and their roles).
- Height, weight, race, general appearance, color and style of hair.
- License number of vehicle(s).
- Direction of escape and method (foot, car, bicycle, etc.)



**St Louis Metropolitan Police
Department**