



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**

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**ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

**SHERIFF PAUL N. WHITE**

December 7, 2009

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Holiday Crime Prevention Tips**

During the holidays, many people can become victims of burglary, theft, and other holiday crime. Protecting yourself and your home from crime is the easiest way to have a safe and happy holiday season.

In an effort to ensure everyone has a safe and fun holiday season the Anderson County Sheriff's Department would like to offer the following Holiday Crime Prevention Tips.

#### **While Shopping:**

- Don't park in unlit areas at night.
- Always lock your car.
- Put your shopping bags in your trunk. Don't try to cover items on your seats with a blanket. Better yet, take your packages straight home after a shopping spree and then go back out.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash with you, or else, keep it in your front pocket not in your purse or wallet.
- Be extra careful when carrying a purse – they are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas. If you must carry one, make sure it has a strap that can go over the shoulder and be held under the arm, making them more difficult for purse snatchers to grab.
- Keep a record of all of your debit and credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Beware of strangers approaching you. This is the time of year when thieves may try various methods to distract you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.

## **At Home:**

- Always lock your home, garage, and outbuildings. Even if you are only going to be away 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.
- Leave a light on when you leave your home at night or put your lights on an automatic timer.
- Leave a television or radio on so your home looks and sounds occupied.
- Make sure your holiday gifts are not visible through the windows and doors of your home.
- Never say you are away from home on the outgoing message on your answering machine or voice mail. Simply say you are unable to answer the phone at the time.
- After the holidays, don't advertise gifts by leaving boxes for the garbage collection. Flatten boxes and place in a sealed garbage bag.

One of the best ways to prevent crime is to have "nosy" neighbors. Be watchful of suspicious cars or people in your neighborhood. Have a neighbor watch your house, and do likewise for them.

If you are away for a few days, ask your neighbor or a family member pick up your mail and newspapers. Better yet, arrange to have all your deliveries, including packages, put on "hold" until you return.

If you see something suspicious, call the Sheriff's Department at 457-2414 or your local police immediately.

One of the best crime prevention tools is a Neighborhood Watch program. For information on starting or joining a Neighborhood Watch group, contact our Crime Prevention Officer, Deputy David Massengill, at 457-6255, extension 150.

Sheriff's deputies will be out in force to help deter burglaries and thefts in an effort to keep our community safe. Ensuring you and your family have a safe holiday season is our top priority.

On behalf of the men and women of the Anderson County Sheriff's Department, best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

**Sheriff Paul White**