



Making a commitment to personal safety: The simplest activities can help reduce our risk

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While our cities, communities and workplaces are protected by committed police and security officers, ultimately, we all need to be more aware, proactive and responsible about our own personal safety. Even the simplest activities can reduce our personal safety risk...

1) Deter and Detect Identity Theft - As identify theft continues to increase, we must protect our personal information.

- * Review your credit report quarterly.
- * Shred documents containing personal information.
- * Keep your Social Security number confidential.
- * Opt out of unnecessary mailing lists.
- * Remove personal information from websites.

2) Be Smart When You Park - In the hustle of everyday life, we often forget about potential dangers in dark parking lots.

- * Park in well-lit, heavily trafficked areas.
- * Have your keys in hand and look into your vehicle before entering.
- * Lock the doors as soon as you are in your vehicle.
- * When alone at night, ask for a security escort to your vehicle.

3) Drive for Life - Driving can be a safety risk all on its own and there are many other factors that can influence our safety.

- * Be extra cautious while driving at night and in hazardous conditions.
- * Carry emergency supplies including flares or reflectors.
- * Take valuables with you or store them out of view.
- * Don't drink and drive!

4) Beware of Flim-Flam Telemarketers - It's sometimes hard to tell the difference between reputable telemarketers and criminals who use the phone to rob people. You can protect yourself by learning how to recognize the danger signs of fraud.

- * Generally, if an offer sounds too good to be true, it is.
- * If considering a purchase and you did not initiate the call, ask for a catalog to be mailed to you.
- * Never reveal your checking account, credit card or social security numbers.

5) Travel Safe Not Sorry -- Use extra caution to protect your personal safety while traveling. The excitement and hurried nature of travel can leave us vulnerable.

- * Carry minimal cash and keep tickets secure in an inside pocket.
- * Do not leave luggage unattended and report any abandoned baggage.
- * Only use taxis with official markings and at official pick-up areas.
- * If traveling by car, be sure your vehicle is serviced and route planned.

* Do not pick up hitchhikers and keep your vehicle locked.

6) Stealth Exodus in Event of Emergency - It is important to be prepared for potential emergencies of any kind.

* Develop an escape plan and a specific meeting place in the event of an emergency.

* Create a "go bag" that includes essentials such as extra eyeglasses, house keys, a small amount of cash, your emergency plan, a spare credit card, prescription medications, whistle, a pair of comfortable shoes or sneakers, portable radio, flashlight, extra batteries, first aid kit, and a three-day supply of food and water.

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