



City of Downey

FUTURE UNLIMITED

PRESS RELEASE

December 14, 2011

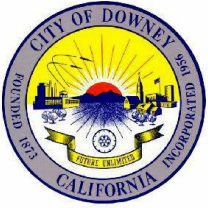
Holiday Safety Tips

With the Holiday Season in full swing, the Downey Police Department would like to offer a few crime prevention tips to help lessen the chances of becoming a victim during the busiest shopping season of the year. Busy stores and crowds during the holidays can invite crime. Avoid being a victim by following these simple safety tips:

- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Use credit cards or checks
- Never leave valuables, including purses and wallets, unattended. Don't let your attention be diverted while leaving these items in shopping carts or strollers
- If you leave store purchases in your vehicle, lock them in your trunk or keep them in a non-visible area. Criminals watch for shoppers who place purchases in their vehicles and leave them unattended
- Park in well-lit areas
- Remain alert in parking lots. Avoid carrying so many packages that you are unaware of your surroundings and personal safety
- Scan the area surrounding your vehicle when you park and when you return, making sure to look for suspicious persons that may be loitering in the area
- Lock your doors immediately after entering your vehicle
- Immediately report suspicious persons and activities to police or store security personnel

At this time of year many people are away from their residences during the day, shopping and running errands in preparation for their holiday celebration. To help prevent your family from becoming a victim of a theft at home, follow these safety tips:

- Packaging left at the curb of your home for trash pick-up is a clue to the criminal element of any items that may be inside your home. Break down packaging and/or wrapping and place it inside the recycle container so that it is not visible to anyone outside of your home
- Beautifully wrapped gifts under a tree which are visible from outside the home are enticing to the criminal element, so avoid leaving any such items within view of unobstructed windows of your home



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- **If you will be going on a holiday vacation or a trip, be sure to have your mail and/or newspaper delivery stopped. Uncollected mail or a pile of newspapers sitting at the front step are a clue that the homeowner is away. If you do go away for the holidays, ask a neighbor to watch your house for suspicious activity or persons**
- **If you shop on the internet or through the mail, and have packages shipped to your home, make arrangements to have those items delivered to a neighbor or your place of employment. During the holiday season, criminals will oftentimes follow postal workers in an effort to locate and steal packages that are left on doorsteps**

Most importantly, if you see suspicious activity, immediately call the Downey Police Department at (562) 861-0771.