

## Is Your Home Secure?

Securing your home is an overlooked issue with many people today. Thankfully, most citizens have never had to endure the painful experience of coming home to the scene of crime. But, it can happen to you. Please read the following simple steps for rating your home security. The Wayne County Sheriff's Office is now offering a free home inspection if you live in Wayne County. Upon request, a Deputy will come to your home and perform a security check of your property. Please call the C.O.P.E. Division at (919)580-4066 for details.

1.) Alarm Systems are the number one deterrent from break-in's. If you have made the decision to invest in an alarm system, wire all doors and windows. Don't overlook the effectiveness of the oldest alarm in the book - a loud barking dog!

2.) Signs in your yard and stickers on your windows indicating an alarm system is present can also be a deterrent. Even if you do not have a system installed, these signs and stickers may make the burglar think twice.

3.) Make sure that all doors and windows have properly functioning locks. An unlocked window will surely be found if your house is targeted by a burglar. If you live in a mobile home, deadbolt locks and a reinforced door jam is recommended.

4.) Shrubs and bushes should be trimmed in such a way as you can clearly see out of your home's windows. Also, you want good visibility between and/or below the bushes when approaching your home from the street. Thick bushes provide excellent cover for burglars from passing motorists or joggers.

5.) Your home, vehicles and garages should be well lit at night. Remember to leave certain lights on if you are going out of town. If you want to get technical about interior lighting while out of town, buy yourself some inexpensive timers and set them for different nights and times. This will turn lights on and off, in different rooms, at different nights and times, giving the appearance that somebody is home. Don't forget to stop the mail and news papers, or arrange to have a neighbor pick them up if you are going out of town.

6.) Have high visibility peep holes or windows installed in your main entrance doors, front and back. If there is a knock at the door during the night, you certainly want to be able to see who it is before opening the door. If you cannot see your visitor, do NOT unlock the door.

7.) If you have expensive items such as jewelry, firearms or antiques, make sure to write down any serial numbers or personal identification numbers. Items with no numbers on them should be photographed. This will greatly assist the Sheriff's Office in recovering your property in the event that it is stolen. Insurance companies will also pay claims in a quicker manner if they have photographs, especially items that can no longer be replaced such as antiques or custom jewelry. All firearms should be locked in a secure area. If you have firearms, investing in a heavy gunsafe should be considered.

8.) Investigate noises heard at night. If you think that you hear something outside, then you probably do. Under no circumstances should you approach a burglar if you spot one. Make sure that you are safe inside and immediately dial 911. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher until Deputies arrive. Try to identify the suspect(s) or vehicle ONLY if you can do so safely.

