

WATCH OUT FOR CON ARTISTS



Don't fall for anything that sounds too good to be true – a free vacation, sweepstakes prizes, cures for cancer and arthritis, a low-risk, high-yield investment scheme.

Never give your credit card, phone card, Social Security or bank account number to anyone over the phone. It's illegal for telemarketers to ask you for these numbers to verify a prize or gift.

Don't let anyone rush you into signing anything – an insurance policy, a sales agreement, or a contract. Read it carefully and have someone you trust check it over.

Beware of individuals claiming to represent companies, consumer organizations, or government agencies that offer to recover lost money from fraudulent telemarketers for a fee.



TIRED OF TELEMARKETING CALLS TO YOUR HOME?

You can seek relief on a free national "do not call" registry. Listing your home or cell phone number with a phone call or a visit on the Internet will stop most, but not all, telemarketing calls effective October 1, 2003, when it became illegal for most for-profit firms to call numbers on the list. Consumers throughout the nation can register their phone numbers online at www.donotcall.gov. You can also call toll-free, 1-888-382-1222 (TTY 1-866-290-4236) from the number you wish to

register. Registration is free and there is no deadline to register.

If you're suspicious, check it out with the Suffolk Police Department (923-2030), the Better Business Bureau (531-1300) or the local Division of Consumer Protection (664-4888).



There is evidence that some people who have been victimized are too embarrassed to report the incident to the authorities.

For your own well-being and to help others from becoming victims, if you have been victimized (or think you have been), **report the circumstances immediately to the Suffolk Police Department.**

GET INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY

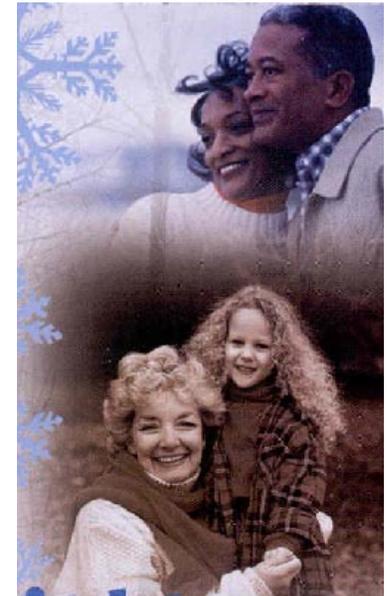
Report any crime or suspicious activities to law enforcement.

A secure environment takes more than locks and lights. It involves working with your neighbors, the Suffolk Police Department and the Suffolk Commonwealth's Attorney's Office in identifying community problems and implementing programs and services to create a safer and more secure environment



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What Senior Citizens Should Know About Crime Prevention



An Information Guide
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INTRODUCTION



As people grow older, their chances of being victims of crime decreases dramatically. But a lifetime of experience coupled with the physical problems associated with aging often make older Americans fearful.

Although they are on the lookout constantly for physical attack and burglary, they are not as alert to frauds and con games – in reality the greatest crime threat to seniors' well-being and trust. To avoid becoming a victim, take these common-sense precautions:

MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE AND SECURE

Install good locks on doors and windows. *Use them!* Dead bolts and double barrel locks are recommended – they are next to impossible to open without a key. Do not use chain locks – they can be easily broken. Don't hide keys in mailboxes, planters or under doormats. Instead, leave an extra set of keys with a trusted neighbor or friend.



Install a wide-angle viewer on your door. Ask for photo identification from service or delivery people before letting them in. If you are the least bit worried, call the company to verify.

Be sure your street address number is large, clear of obstruction, and well-lighted so police or other emergency personnel can find your home quickly.

Consider a home alarm system that provides emergency monitoring for burglary, fire and medical emergencies.

Timers are inexpensive and very effective crime prevention tools. They give your home that "lived in" look that deters robbers.

Do not put your name on your door or mailbox. If you live alone, do not put your full name in phone registries – use only your first initial. By advertising your name, it is very easy for thieves to call and see if there is anyone at home.



Do not leave large amounts of money or expensive/sentimental jewelry in your home. These are favorite targets of burglars because they are easy to carry and hard to trace. Be sure to engrave numbers or other distinguishing features on all valuables. Take photos if possible.

BE ALERT WHEN OUT AND ABOUT

Go out with friends or family when possible – not alone.

Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the strap. Put a wallet in an



inside coat or front pants pocket. Avoid carrying heavy packages and bulky purses. Keep your keys in an easily accessible location.

Don't carry credit cards you don't need or large amounts of cash. Keep your money hidden. Pay with small bills.

Use direct deposit for Social Security and other regular checks.

Whether you're a passenger or driver, keep car doors locked. Be particularly alert in parking lots and garages. Park near an entrance. If you suspect you are in danger, honk your horn repeatedly. This will attract the attention of bystanders who may be able to offer assistance. If you think you are being followed, pull into the nearest gas station or safe place. Do not drive home.

If your car breaks down, do not raise your hood – this blocks your field of vision. Wait for someone to stop. Do not get out of your vehicle and keep your doors locked. Should someone offer to help, ask them to call a service truck for you.

If someone or something makes you uneasy, trust your instincts and leave.