

# HOLIDAY SAFETY



## AT HOME

- Lock your doors and windows if you are going out, no matter how short a period of time you will be gone.
- Keep gifts away from areas, such as windows, where they can be seen by outside travelers.
- Use a peep-hole when someone comes to your door. Never let anyone into your home that you do not know.
- When returning to your home from an outing, do not go in if there are signs that someone has forced entry while you were away. Go to a neighbor's house and call the police immediately.
- If you shop online and have packages shipped to your home, always make sure someone is there to receive them or ship them to your work address.

## TRAVELING

Take precautions to prevent your home from looking vacant:

- Stop your mail or newspaper service.
- Have your walks shoveled.
- Get an electric timer for your lights.
- Call the police department and ask for vacation patrol checks. It will alert officers there should not be activity at your home while you are gone.
- If you are traveling in a car, know your route of travel; check the road conditions before you leave.

## OUT AND ABOUT

- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or other valuables.
- Do not leave packages unattended in your car unless locked in the trunk.
- When carrying a purse, hold it close to your body. Always carry a wallet in an inside coat or front pant pocket, never a back pant pocket.

- Stay in well-lit areas and on heavily traveled streets. Avoid routes that take you through dark, vacant areas.
- When shopping, try to go with family or friends.
- If shopping with your children, make sure that they know who to go to in case they get lost: a store clerk, security guard or police officer.
- Always trust your instincts. If people or locations are making you uneasy, leave or stay away.
- Use a debit or credit card instead of cash, if possible—it is easier to carry and replace if lost or stolen.
- If possible, use the ATM during the day. Be ready with card in hand as you approach the machine, do not linger.

## DECORATING

- When stringing lights, make sure that the cords are in good condition.
- Do not overload outlets; it is a good practice to stick to three sets of lights per extension cord.
- Test lights before hanging and unplug before doing maintenance on them.
- Keep candles in non-combustible and sturdy containers and, when burning, out of children's reach. Ensure wax drips are contained.
- Clean fireplaces annually. Open the damper or flu and make sure that a screen or door is securely in place while the fire is burning.
- Extinguish candles and fireplaces and unplug lights before leaving.

## DONATING TO CHARITIES

- Before donating make sure that you know about the charity.
- If solicited by an organization, ask for literature on them before you donate.
- If solicited by an individual, offer food or other non-monetary donations.