

Important Recommendations from the  
Office of the Fulton County District Attorney



## Protect Your Family and Your Home this Holiday Season

*The holiday season is a special time of year for everyone. Although celebrated differently, most people look forward to holiday meals, time spent with family on holiday vacations, and gift giving. For burglars, this same time of year will bring empty homes, filled with the latest products and valuables, and the opportunity to make quick cash and provide holiday presents for their loved ones.*

*The Fulton County Multi-Jurisdictional Burglary Task Force would like to remind people to be on their guard against opportunistic burglars this holiday season and to take all necessary precautions to safeguard their homes. These recommendations were compiled by the Burglary Task Force to assist in adding protection to your home.*

- ✓ Take the time to trim back any bushes or trees that block visibility to your home. Check all entryways to your home (windows and doors) to ensure they are properly closed and secured. Secure any sliding glass doors with a pin lock and a dowel in the door track.
- ✓ If your home is equipped with an alarm system, make sure that everyone in your household knows how to properly activate and deactivate the system. Alarm systems and alarm advertisements are the best prevention method against Fulton County burglars.
- ✓ If leaving your home for an extended time, find ways to make your house look occupied. Give the illusion that someone is home at all times by setting interior and exterior lights on timers or leaving on a radio or T.V. to deter would be burglars.
- ✓ Exterior holiday lights do more than make your house look beautiful, they also light up the areas around windows and doors where burglars may lurk.
- ✓ Retain your receipts for major purchases in a safe place and record the serial number for your property directly on the receipt. In the event that these items do get stolen, this record will maintain proof of the purchase and aid police in tracking down the stolen item.
- ✓ Be cautious about solicitors, especially during this time of year. A stop at your doorway may provide them the opportunity to look inside of your house for valuable items and map the layout for a later return.

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- ✓ Ask that items scheduled to be delivered to your home be delivered at time when you will be home to accept the package. Large packages left on doorsteps are susceptible to opportunistic burglars passing through the neighborhood.
- ✓ Many people love to display a brightly-lit Christmas tree with presents around the skirt. If visible through a window or doorway, this can be tempting for burglars scouting the neighborhood. Reconsider hiding the presents in a secure place and placing them under the tree at the last minute.
- ✓ Don't announce your new high-dollar purchases after the holidays. Break down the boxes of TVs, stereos, computers, etc. If possible, stagger the times that these boxes are placed in an enclosed trash can.
- ✓ Don't advertise your travel plans on online social networking sites. Broadcasting your absence lets burglars know that your home is unoccupied and vulnerable.
- ✓ In the event that you are traveling for the holidays, consider asking a trusted neighbor to help protect your home in your absence. Ask your neighbor to collect any mail or newspapers delivered or have your service suspended until you return. Provide a key to your home to your trusted neighbor so that they can make your house look occupied, either by turning on lights, turning on the radio, or parking a car in your driveway while you're away. Notify your local police department that you will be away for an extended time period and provide contact information for the neighbor who will be watching your home in your absence.
- ✓ If leaving a dog at home for the holidays, consider having a trusted neighbor or friend pet sit at the house instead of using a kennel. Dogs of all sizes can be a deterrent to burglars.



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