

## ***A WORD ON CHARITIES***

Be cautious of those going door-to-door collecting for charities. Ask to see an ID that identifies them with that charity. Never give cash. Please report suspicious people. If your gut tells you “something is not right,” it probably isn’t. Call 911 or our non-emergency number at (206) 625-5011 to report the incident.

Just some things for you to consider at this time of year. Be good to yourself and to others. Most of all, be safe. Enjoy the Season.



*For more detailed crime prevention information, please check our website at [www.cityofseattle.gov/police](http://www.cityofseattle.gov/police)*



**Seattle Police Department**  
610 Fifth Avenue Seattle, WA 98104



## ***HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS***



Many of us will take time off and celebrate the holidays. We may buy presents for family and friends. We may leave town. Given this background, there are some things you should consider. The following are recommendations that can reduce your risk of being a crime victim during the holiday season.

## **WHILE SHOPPING**

**T**ake a friend along when doing holiday shopping. Using the buddy system reduces your chances of being a victim of robbery.

**W**hen paying by cash, only take out the amount needed and keep the remainder out of view. It's always a good idea to carry minimal amounts of cash, regardless of the time of year.

**W**hen Using an Automated Teller Machine....

- ◆ Only take out the amount you need, rather than the maximum you can get.
- ◆ Don't walk away from the cash machine counting your money. That's an invitation to someone who may not have the best of intentions in mind.
- ◆ Beware of strangers hanging around the ATM. Wait until they leave, or consider using an alternate cash machine. You should report suspicious people to bank personnel, mall security and/or police.
- ◆ Secure your money and your bank card or credit card back in your wallet or pocket before leaving the ATM.
- ◆ Always keep your PIN number separate from your bank and/or credit card.

**D**on't tempt a thief by leaving your purse, wallet or packages unattended. It only takes a second to grab them.

**B**eware of strangers who bump, shove or get too close. Pickpockets may use these diversions to lift your wallet.

**B**e cautious of those you don't know who offer to carry bags and packages for you. Depending on where you shop, store personnel or mall security may offer assistance in carrying packages to your car or escorting you to your vehicle.



**I**f you have to return to your car to store purchases, place them in the trunk out of sight. Do this when you get to your car, rather than waiting until you park at your next stop. Gifts and other valuables should never be left in clear view.

**B**efore returning to your car, make sure you're not over-burdened with packages. Have your car keys in hand to avoid "searching" for them when you reach your car.





## ***SAFETY ON THE ROAD***



When was your car last serviced? Is your spare tire “ready” to be used? Check all emergency equipment to ensure proper working order.

If you are alone and your car breaks down, you have a few options:

- ◆ If you’re able to move the car to a well-lit and well-traveled area, like a convenience store parking lot or similar area, do so to remove yourself from the flow of traffic. You can easily call for assistance at that point.
- ◆ If someone offers you a ride or assistance, trust your instincts. If your instincts tell you not to accept the ride, don’t. Ask the person to instead call for a tow truck and/or a police agency if you don’t have a cellular phone.
- ◆ If you have a cellular phone, call for assistance and also to let your family or friends know where you are and your current situation.

If you are out at night or anticipate returning to your car after dark, park in a well-lit area.



Exercise caution when it comes to hitchhikers. Don’t get carried away with the holiday spirit and leave yourself vulnerable.



## ***LEAVING TOWN & TRAVELLING***

If you’re going to be away for the holidays, ask a friend or trusted neighbor to watch your home.

Let your trusted neighbors know that you plan to be out town so that they can watch your home for you. If they see suspicious activity while you are gone, they will know to call 911 for you.

Have the Post Office hold your mail.

Have a neighbor bring in your newspaper rather than having the paper stopped. The fewer people who know your home is not occupied the better (except when it comes to your trusted neighbors).

When traveling by air, exercise caution with regard to airport solicitors.



Keep your baggage in your possession and in sight at all times.



## ***HOLIDAY PARTIES***

If you will be hosting a party, establish a guest list and greet your guests at the door. Be careful when opening your home to “uninvited guests.”



Balance the desire to want to show off your valuables and treasures with security consciousness. Put easily portable valuable items out of sight. This will reduce the threat that they may be stolen by a guest. Also, your guests cannot inadvertently mention the priceless items they have seen to someone else.

You probably won't need credit cards or a checkbook at a party, so leave these at home.

If you are attending a holiday fund-raiser, and you know you're going to be writing a check, just take one or two checks already made out to the organization the fundraiser is for and leave the remainder at home.



If you are going to be serving liquor, do it responsibly! Have a good selection of non-alcoholic beverages to offer.

Serve coffee and water as the party winds down. No one really needs “One for the Road.”

If a friend has had too much to drink, insist on making other arrangements for getting them home safely, or offer to let them stay overnight. Remember: Drunk Drivers are dangerous to themselves and others.

### **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE!!**

Take a cab, have someone give you a ride home, ensure you have a designated driver, or impose upon your hosts to let you crash on the couch. Better the couch than hurting yourself or others.



## ***DISPOSING OF PACKAGING***

When disposing of the packaging in which gifts and other purchases come, realize that when you place these out for recycling or trash collection, those boxes sitting out on the curb on collection day give a passer-by a pretty good indication of what's in your home. Recycle the packaging, yes - but break the boxes down first and don't put them on the curb until collection day.