

SENIOR CITIZENS SAFETY TIPS

As a senior citizen, chances of becoming a victim of crime increases dramatically. You may have a lifetime of experiences, but being aware of your surroundings, staying alert of situations that may make you vulnerable.

Following your intuition and watching out for con-games can make all the difference in staying safe.

REMEMBER! Because many criminals target those victims who are considered vulnerable, it is especially imperative that senior citizens be the "BOSS" (Be Observant, Smart, and Safe) whether at home or during their travels.

Safety in the Community:

- Be alert of your surroundings whether you are in an office building, walking down a street, in a shopping mall, waiting for a bus or driving a vehicle.
- Carry your purse close to your body...not dangling by the strap. Never leave your purse in a shopping cart. Never leave your purse unattended.
- Place your wallet in the inside coat or front pants pocket.
- Wrap a rubber band around your wallet to make it harder to be removed from your pocket.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash in your wallet, purse or in your pockets.
- Try to sit close to the bus driver or the "exit" while riding public transportation.
- Always look around before entering or exiting a vehicle. Once inside the car, lock doors and keep them locked while driving. Be particularly alert in parking lots and underground parking structures.
- Carry a hat pin with you. Slip it in side of purse for easy access. This is an easy object to use if necessary.

Safety at Home:

- Sign up for direct deposit, instead of having your social security or other pension checks mailed to your home. At many banks, free checking accounts are available to senior citizens. Your bank has all the information.

▪ Be certain that all door locks are functioning properly and install deadbolts on all doors. Make sure windows are locked and cannot be forced open. Secure all basement and attic windows.

▪ Make sure your front door has a "peep" hole so that you can see who is at your door. If not possible, make sure you keep your screen door locked at all times.

▪ Ask for identification from service or delivery people before letting them in. If you are the least bit concerned, call the company to verify.

▪ Don't be misled in believing con artists who present investment schemes, funeral scams, and/or home improvement scams.

▪ Always be suspicious of phone solicitors who ask for your personal information such as credit card number, social security number or checking account numbers. Ask them to mail you the information. If they do not have your address, then do not give it to them.

▪ If you have an account that you need to give the last four numbers of your social security, call them and ask to change to a password. Make sure that this password is one you won't forget.

▪ Make sure all shrubs that are near windows are cut back so that you can see out them clearly. You do not want someone to easily have coverage if they are trying to enter your home wrongly.

▪ Make sure you have a light in your back yard (can use porch light) at night so that it is lit up.

▪ Do not leave ladders lying around your yard. Store them properly.