

# **CRIME PREVENTION TIPS\***

## **Protecting Your Home**

**Here are some tips while doing a perimeter check of your home:**

1. Are shrubs trimmed back around windows and doorways to eliminate potential hiding places?
2. Does your home look occupied while you're away?
3. Do you have a trusted neighbor who can check on your home daily when you're on vacation? (Never announce or post your plans on Facebook or any other social media site. Criminals are known to check these sites regularly and they can easily track down your address).
4. Do you have a secure deadbolt lock on all doors leading to the outside as well as lights that are kept on at night above all entrances?
5. Have you replaced the standard ½-inch screws in the deadbolt strikeplates with 2-inch or 3-inch screws? This will make the door frame stronger.
6. Do you keep lights on at night or have motion detection lights installed above entrance ways?
7. Make sure you have peep-holes in your doors to see who is outside before you open the door.

Speaking of doors, never open yours to strangers – talk to them through a locked door or storm door, if installed, and only open it if you feel completely comfortable doing so.

**Talk frequently with your kids and other members of your family about being safe.**

1. If they are the last ones out of the house, make sure they know to lock all doors and windows, including garage doors and side/back entrances.
2. Make sure they also know never to open the door to a stranger.
3. Your children should have a response ready if a stranger comes to the door when they are home alone, which again should be said through a locked door, such as “my Dad said we’re not interested,” or “my Mom said for you to please leave or she will call the police.”
4. Never tell your children to not respond at all when a stranger knocks – burglars typically knock on the door of a home to see if anyone is inside before they break in. You don’t want your child to end up face to face with a criminal who has just broken in.

**Remember: always call the police non-emergency number (385-5000) immediately if you notice anyone or anything suspicious; call 911 for crimes in progress. For more safety tips, call the Crime Prevention Unit at 385-1006**

\* Source: Virginia Beach Police Department Crime Prevention Bureau

