

Check your home, in daylight and at night, with the mindset of a burglar.

Consider:

- Are your house and property visible from the street? Are they visible to neighbours?
- Are your property boundaries marked by a fence or hedge? Are you discouraging trespassers?
- Is your home and property well-lit at night?
- Are your exterior entrances hidden from view?
- Are your exterior doors and frames sturdy? Can they be forced open?
- Is there glass in or near the doors that if broken gives access to the home / locks?
- Can hinge pins on any external doors be accessed from the outside?
- Are locks and other door hardware securely installed to the door and the home framing?
- Can you identify who is at the door? (i.e. 180 degree peephole)
- Do you use a chain lock when you answer the door? An intercom system to speak to strangers or talking with the door closed is recommended.
- Can patio doors or windows be lifted out of the tracks? Do they lock?
- Are garage doors kept locked? Is the pedestrian door from the garage to the home in an attached garage locked? This interior door should be of the same standard as an exterior door.
- Can second story windows be accessed from a tree, ladder in the yard, or lower story roofs?
- Does your house look lived in when you are away? (i.e. someone picks up the mail, timers switch lights on and off, walkways are shovelled and grass is cut.)
- Do you know a trustworthy neighbour?
- Never answer stranger's questions about your neighbours, even if they know them by name.
- Do you have an alarm system, emergency escape plan, list of emergency contacts? Are all members of the home familiar with them?
- Are your valuables marked for identification and insured? Should they be kept in a safety deposit box? A video of your home's contents can be stored in your safety deposit box or with relatives/friends.
- Do not leave house keys hidden outside. If you must, use a properly mounted key box with programmable access code, or leave the key with a trusted neighbour.
- Check identification of sales and service people. Use the phone number in the phone book, not a number the person at the door provides.
- Do not let a stranger into your house for any reason, like to use the telephone. This is a tactic to get you to open the door. Offer to call for assistance while they remain outside.

(continued)

- Do not leave children home alone until they are mature enough to know and follow the rules for safety and emergency situations. Consider:
 - Do they know when and how to call 911?
 - Do they know what to say to a 911 operator?
 - Do they know to call you immediately upon their getting home?
 - Do they know where the first aid kit is and how to use it?
 - Do they know where a working flashlight and spare batteries are?
 - Do they know where the home fire extinguisher is?
 - Do they know rules about answering the phone or door and what to say?
 - Do they know what to do for unexpected deliveries, emergency requests, and unknown visitors?
 - Do they know what to do if the door or window is ajar when arriving?
 - If you are unavailable, do they have a back up plan and contact(s) if they are locked out, feel ill or experience some other occurrence?

Your best weapon is your brain. Use common sense, imagination, and good judgment.