

Shopped Out! Caroled Out!

Well, everyone is shopped out, caroled out, noeled out and after eating Christmas dinner is probably passed out! Remember there are only 364 more shopping days until Christmas! Let's just make sure that even though we are worn out, our common sense doesn't go out the window. There are several tips that we can use to help make us less of a target for criminals after Christmas and during the holidays. I know we are all happy about the gifts that we have received for Christmas or the trips we have planned for the rest of the Christmas break, but let's not announce to the criminals what we've gotten or leave our houses open to an easy burglary. How do we do that? Here are just a couple of ways.

Instead of:

- Leaving boxes for gifts out in the street for trash pickup (indicating what might be in the house).
- Running lights extension cords and decorations through doors and windows (not allowing them to be secured).
- Running multiple small errands throughout the day and leaving doors unlocked, because "I'll be right back".
- Leaving cute holiday messages on voice mail or answering machines like "we'll be over the river and through the woods to grandmother's house for the holiday, see you when we get back".
- Posting on face book, twitter or other social media what you received or how excited you will be about being gone for the holidays.

Try:

- Break the boxes down, cut them up or take them to the garbage sites yourself.
- Make sure doors and windows can be secured and locked.
- Plan errands ahead of time and just make one trip if possible.
- Just use your normal message, or change it to include a seasonal greeting. Not advising your location or plans.
- Post pictures of your trip after you've returned.

Let's all try to have a peaceful and restful holiday season, so when we start the New Year next week we are ready to put the clean slate to good use. Don't allow yourself to be victimized. Even though it's the giving time of the year, don't give away your security or peace of mind. Merry Christmas! And thank you again for your time and for helping us to better serve you.