

IDENTITY THEFT



Identity Theft is the fastest growing crime in the world. Identity Theft costs American consumers billions of dollars in lost revenues each year. Victims of Identity Theft spend years trying to clean their credit identity. Here are a few easy tips to reduce the **OPPORTUNITY** of becoming a victim of Identity Theft.

Shred Financial Documents Anything that has your name and address on it should be shredded, and that includes most bills. Never throw these items away in the trash until they have been shredded.

Avoid Using Free WI-FI; Many restaurants and shopping centers offer free WI-FI for internet access. Internet thieves, known as;” Skimmers” intercept your data, and they can send a virus to your computer, gain access to important account numbers, passwords and PIN numbers.

Use Cash When Possible; Each time a Credit/Debit card is used for a transaction, the possibility looms that the card or account number will be stolen. Withdrawal cash from a recognized bank ATM for minor purchases

Review ALL Bank and Credit Statements; By law, a consumer is not responsible for unauthorized purchases and withdrawals based on fraudulent activity if reported within 60 days of the transaction.

A Message From The Sheriff

On behalf of the men and women of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office thank you for taking an interest in public safety. Sharing information about crime and victimization is a priority for our agency, and we are pleased to offer you the crime prevention tips in this publication.

We ask that you reciprocate, sharing this information with your family, neighbors and coworkers; and reporting suspicious persons and circumstances to law enforcement by calling 911, or the toll free, anonymous TIPS hotline at 1-888-399-TIPS (4877).

Further, don't allow yourself to be a victim, and reduce the opportunity for offenders to commit crime by implementing these prevention measures into your daily activities.

Additional information is available on our web site, at www.carrollcountysheriff.com, including the ability to request patrol services, or schedule a Home Security Survey. The Home Security Survey is free of charge, and the confidential findings provide additional suggestions to enhance the security of your residence.

In closing, please do not hesitate to call upon us, for the members of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office are committed to partnerships with community, professional and government associates that promote the local quality of life, and the best environment to live, learn, and work.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Kenneth L. Tregoning

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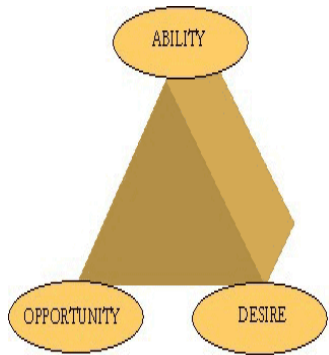
UNDERSTANDING CRIME PREVENTION



CARROLL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

What Is Crime Prevention?

By definition, Crime prevention is:



“Being aware that a crime **CAN** occur, **ANTICIPATING** its form, location, time and victim, and **TAKING ACTION** to reduce the chances of its happening.”

There are three elements the criminal must possess for a crime to occur: **DESIRE, ABILITY** and **OPPORTUNITY**. Eliminate just one of these elements and no crime will take place. You have no control over the first two elements. Whether the criminal has the desire or ability to commit the crime is solely up to them. However, you can have great control over, if not eliminate, the third element – **OPPORTUNITY**.

Crime prevention is using **INSTINCT, ACTION, and COMMON SENSE**, to eliminate or greatly reduce the criminal’s opportunity. A large share of the responsibility of reducing the opportunity of becoming a victim lies with you! That is not to say that if you are the victim of crime it is your fault and not the fault of the criminal... certainly not! But the fact remains that we all have a personal part to play regarding crime prevention.

Crime Prevention is a community strategy that has been proven successful in many Suburban and urban neighborhoods.

How Do I Practice Crime Prevention?

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF ON CRIME PREVENTION TECHNIQUES.

Contact the Carroll County Sheriff’s Office for information on how to make your home more secure, mark your personal property and maintain personal security. Inquire about a residential home security survey.

2. KNOW YOUR SHERIFF’S DEPUTIES

Know the location of the Sheriff’s Office and sub-stations.. Utilize the **911** system. Get to know and support your local deputies.

3. REPORT ANY CRIME

Report any crime or suspicion of a crime at once. No violation is too small to be reported. Don’t assume that someone else has already reported it.

4. STAY INFORMED

Follow the news. Keep posted on local crime problems. Attend public meetings. Get to know the local crime situation and what’s being done about it.

5. WORK WITH OTHERS

Support groups, especially those working with young people, to foster a sense of community that builds character or that have active programs that help prevent crime.



VEHICLE SECURITY

Take Out Valuables

If you can leave your valuables at home, do so. Otherwise, when you get to your destination, take valuables with you. If you do have to leave them in your vehicle place them in your trunk when you reach your final destination.

Lock your Vehicle

Verify that your vehicle is securely locked before leaving the area. Possible remote locking malfunction or a low battery could leave your vehicle unlocked.

Close Windows and Sun/Moon Roof

Windows and sun/moon roof (if equipped) allows a thief a quick and quiet way to enter your vehicle. Even a crack in the window makes the thief’s job so much easier. Verify that your vehicle’s windows are rolled up and the sun/moon roof is closed before leaving the vehicle.

RESIDENTIAL SECURITY

Many burglars spend no more than 60 seconds trying to break into a home. Good lighting, strong locks and neighbors who watch out for each other can be deterrents. The following tips can help make your home less appealing to a burglar.

- Have lights at all entrances.
- Do not leave a schedule of your times away from home on your answering machine.
- Know which of your neighbors you can trust and depend upon in an emergency.
- Don’t hide extra keys in easily accessible places.
- Ask for photo identification for all repair persons. If you are suspicious, call to verify employment.
- Never give personal information to telephone solicitors.
- Don’t flaunt your possessions. Destroy large purchase containers i.e.; plasma T.V. box and don’t sit these containers out with the regular garbage.