



## SAFETY TIPS

Always CALL 911 in an emergency.

### Residential Safety

- Install deadbolts on doors, and locks on windows and fences.
- Lock all doors and windows when leaving your home even if it is for a short time.
- Trim trees or bushes surrounding your home so burglars do not have easy access to your house or roof.
- Leave exterior lights on at night or consider installing motion detector lights on your property.
- Always make sure your garage door is closed, especially at night.
- Consider installing a security system or getting a dog as a pet. Dogs are often times alert to approaching visitors or strangers.
- While on vacation, have the post office hold or have a trusted neighbor or friend pick up your mail. Arrange for someone to shovel your driveway and sidewalk if necessary.
- Use timers for lights and television to make your house appear occupied while you are away.
- Be suspicious of persons going door-to-door asking for money.

### Internet Safety

- Never post your vacation plans on social networking sites.
- Create strong passwords and keep them safe. Try to be unpredictable and use at least 10 characters.
- Be skeptical about free trial offers. Some companies use free trials to sign you up for products and bill you every month until you cancel. Before you agree to a free trial, research the company and read the cancellation policy.
- Sign up for free scam alerts from the Federal Trade Commission at [ftc.gov/scams](http://ftc.gov/scams). Get the latest tips and advice about scams sent right to your inbox.
- Be aware of online dating scams who create fake online profiles/relationships only to steal money. Scammers will profess their love quickly, ask for money, and lure you off the dating site.
- Don't reply to text, email, or pop-up messages that ask for personal or financial information, and don't follow any links in the message.

### Personal Safety/Reducing Risk of Identity Theft

- When away from home, park in a well-lit, open area that is near a security camera if possible. The more populated and secure the area, the less likely a theft will occur.
- Do not carry any more (funds or identification) than necessary in your wallet.
- Never write down a PIN number and carry it with you.
- Avoid using easily available information for passwords such as mother's maiden name or family member birthdates.
- Do not give out personal information over the phone or to persons unknown to you.
- Send outgoing mail through post office collection boxes or at the local post office.
- Check credit card receipts against monthly bills.
- Shred credit card applications, receipts, bills and other financial information before discarding.
- Don't carry your Social Security card or birth certificate with you – leave them in a secure location.
- Keep a list of all your credit card accounts and bank accounts in a secure place so you can quickly call the issuers to inform them about missing or stolen cards.
- Never give any credit card, bank or Social Security information to anyone by telephone, even if you made the call, unless you can positively verify that the call is legitimate.
- Beware of "phishing" scams. Scam artists "phish" for victims by pretending to be banks, stores, or government agencies. They do this over the phone, in emails and in the U.S. mail. Don't give out your personal information. Don't respond to a request to verify your account number or password. Legitimate companies do not request this kind of information in this way.

### Vehicle Safety

- Never leave valuables in your car.
- Chain and lock bicycles to a secure unmovable item when unattended.
- Although it is tempting on cold days to warm up your car by leaving it running while you are inside, doing so leaves you at risk for car theft.