



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject:	Home and Property Security and Safety Reminders		
Releasing Officer:	Lt. Ron McMillin		
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(Westerville, Ohio) – The Westerville Division of Police reminds residents they can take preventative steps to reduce their risks of becoming a victim of a crime. With the onset of warmer weather, opportunities for crime typically increase. Taking steps to secure your home and vehicle may discourage a criminal from targeting you and your personal property.

Consider this checklist whether in or away from the home.

Securing the home:

- Lock all doors (front, back, side and interior garage).
- Close blinds and secure first-story windows.
- For homes with a house alarm, activate the alarm (and associated motion sensors).
- Always close your exterior garage door.
- Turn on exterior lighting.
- Cut back large shrubbery around the outside of windows.

Thefts from vehicles are one of the most common crimes in a community like Westerville, and most often happen to unlocked vehicles. Locking your vehicle greatly reduces your chance of becoming a victim of theft.

Securing vehicles:

- Keep windows up and doors locked when parked.
- Always park in well-lit areas.
- Remove all valuable materials from the vehicle, or secure it in the trunk.
- Never leave property visible in the vehicle. Purses, laptop computers and electronic equipment are popular items for thieves.

- Park your vehicle off the street and in your driveway whenever possible. If you have a garage, it is the best place for your vehicle to be parked. This one act can reduce your risk dramatically.

The Westerville Division of Police asks the community to report anything that appears unusual in public parking lots or in neighborhoods.

- Call the non-emergency phone line at (614) 882-7444. **Call 9-1-1 for emergencies.**
- Identify yourself by name, address and phone number.
- Report the type of crime (burglary, assault, suspicious person, or vehicle, etc.).
- State the location. Be prepared to be as specific as possible.
- Be prepared to provide a description of the suspect, a description of the vehicle, including license plate number and the direction of travel, if applicable.
- Stay on the phone with the dispatcher until they tell you that you may hang up. (Unless you are in fear for your safety).

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