

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

For events that are life-threatening or immediately damaging to property, call 911.

To report suspicious activity, use the non-emergency number, 385-5000.

The most important information needed by the police is:

- What happened
- When
- Where
- If anyone is hurt
- Description(s) of suspect(s)
- Direction of travel
- If there are any weapons involved
- License numbers and descriptions of any vehicles

By acting quickly and calmly, your call could stop a crime. Don't dwell on your possible embarrassment if your call should prove to be unfounded. Think instead of what could have happened if you had not called.

JOIN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighborhood Watch is a program that has been implemented in many neighborhoods to prevent crime. The program is simple - it combines neighborhood concern and awareness with police cooperation. Be alert to things happening in your neighborhood, and call if you see anything suspicious. Contact the Crime Prevention Unit for more information.

CRIME PREVENTION

“The anticipation, recognition, and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it.”

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CPTED -

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

(Pronounced sep-ted)

- **Natural Surveillance** - Create an environment where there is plenty of opportunity for people engaged in their normal behavior to observe the space around them.
- **Access Control** - Limit access to make potential criminals stand out.
- **Territorial Behavior** - Create a sense of “my space” so possible criminals are less likely to intrude, and individuals who do intrude are more likely to stand out.
- **Maintenance** - Care and maintenance allows for the continued use of a space for its intended purpose. Deterioration shows a lack of concern by the intended users.

A CERTIFIED CRIME PREVENTION COMMUNITY

For more information on this or any other Crime Prevention topic, please contact:

Virginia Beach Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
2509 Princess Anne Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23456
Phone: 757-385-1006



VIRGINIA BEACH
POLICE DEPARTMENT

HOME SECURITY

A Guide for
Protecting Your
Home and Property



Prepared in the public interest by the
Virginia Beach Police Department
vb.gov.com/dept/police/

HOME SECURITY CHECKLIST

LANDSCAPING

- Do low trees or high shrubs block the view of your home from the street? Remember, items which give you privacy also give potential burglars a place to hide.
- Are all second story windows protected from access by items such as trees and ladders?

LIGHTING

- Are the entrances to your home illuminated?
- Is there glare from the lights which may blind potential witnesses?
- Are the street lights working? If not, report to Public Works at 385-4131 or vb.gov.com/e-gov.

HOUSE NUMBERS

- Are address numbers visible from the street, even at night?

DOORS

- Are exterior doors a solid wood core or metal, rather than hollow core?
- Is there a peephole or some other way of viewing the exterior of the door? Consider installing a wide-angle peephole for increased visibility.
- Is the garage door kept locked?

ALARMS SYSTEMS

- When evaluating alarms, consult several companies and compare their coverage, equipment, costs, back-up power, etc.
- If you chose to have an alarm, do not depend only on the alarm to protect you. Be sure to use the proper locking devices.

LOCKS

- A good quality deadbolt lock is recommended for all exterior doors.
- Is there glass within 40" of the door lock? Consider the various types of locks which may be appropriate for that location. Other options may be relocating the door, replacing the door with a solid door, or covering the glass with a shatter-resistant security film.
- Do you lock the door from the garage into the home? This door should also be treated as an exterior door.
- Are all strike plates secured with a minimum of 2 1/2 - 3" screws? This is typically the weakest point on a door, and the most likely to give if the door is kicked or forced. Pre-hung doors are typically hung in such a way that the standard short screws with the strike plate extend only into a narrow board or air.
- Are all sliding doors secured with a "Charley bar" or similar device?
- Have the locks been used by previous residents or contractors? If so, consider having the locks changed or re-keyed.

WINDOWS

- Are all easily accessible windows secured with a lock or locked and pinned? (In case of emergency, a bedroom window should be a means of escape. A window lock needing a key or tool to unlock it should not be used.)
- Sliding windows can be secured by the same methods as a sliding door, such as a metal rod or wooden dowel.
- Ensure that bedrooms windows are still a means of ready escape in case of a fire or other emergency.

You cannot make your home completely burglar-proof, but you can make entry so difficult that the burglar will go elsewhere. These are some considerations while assessing the vulnerability of your home. Keep in mind these are only recommendations, and not a guarantee that a crime will not happen.

SAFETY AT HOME

- Get to know your neighbors. They are your best means of safety and security when it comes to looking out for your property.
- Do not let strangers in to use your telephone. Have them wait outside and make the call for them.
- If you think your home was burglarized, go to a safe place and call the police.
- Never give your name, address, credit card or social security number to an unknown caller.
- Tear up or shred all "pre-approved" credit card offers before throwing them away.
- Keep a list or photocopy (front and back) of all credit cards and store in a secure location.
- Keep an inventory of your personal property in a safe place. A videotape is one way to quickly make a thorough record. Also log model and serial numbers. Consider marking your property with an engraver or black light security pen.

SAFETY WHILE YOU ARE AWAY

- When leaving home for several days, do you insure the home looks lived in?
- Ask a neighbor or friend to pick up your mail, and mow your lawn or shovel your walk.
- Do not hide a key outside.
- Keep your car doors locked and valuables or suitcases out of sight.

When upgrading your home security, remember to also evaluate your home's fire detection equipment, and practice a family escape plan.