



SHAKER HEIGHTS

March 2009

Dear Community Members:

I hope that this message finds you all well, and that you have weathered the winter months. I am happy to report that in 2008, crime was down approximately 14% from 2007, despite the lagging economy, which oftentimes has a negative effect on crime rates. I attribute this reduction to two things – the hard work and dedication of the men and women of the police department and those of you in the community who dedicate your time and energy to watching over your neighbors and neighborhoods, making sure that Shaker Heights continues to be a safe place to live and visit.

Spring and summer are quickly approaching and it is time for many of us to start planning our outdoor activities. But just like during the holidays, please be reminded that this is an opportune time for crime. As we begin to enjoy the next few months of warm weather, our homes are often left open, and we tend to be careless by leaving windows and doors open on our homes, garages, and autos, sometimes leaving "goodies" – cell phones, briefcases, purses, and bikes – in plain view. Our trees and shrubs are blossoming, blocking the light from streetlights and our view of your yards and homes from the street, and many of you are planning vacations.

In preparation for a safe and healthy spring and summer, I am asking for your help in keeping crime at bay by reading the crime prevention tips below and taking the necessary steps to help us prevent crime.

Please stay safe and have a great spring and summer.

Crime Prevention Tips to protect you and your home during the summer

"Locks, lights, and neatly trimmed shrubbery' are keys to home and personal security."

1. Install lighting, such as "motion" lights or "dusk to dawn" detector lights, on the exterior of your home.
2. Trim shrubbery around your home. Shrubby should be cut low and neatly trimmed so as not to provide someone who is considering entering your home with a place to hide.
3. Check your door locks to be sure they are sturdy, functioning properly, and are the proper type, such as dead bolt or key to key type, where glass is present. All locks should be keyed to one key only. A key should be placed in the immediate area in case of emergency -- hidden but accessible.
4. Check all windows, double hung, casement, and sliding windows. Be sure they are functioning and locking properly.



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5. Make sure your address is clearly visible from the street for emergency and identification purposes.
6. Keep your garage door closed and locked when you are not outside, and lock all property in your garage with a locking device and place it in a location so that it is not visible from the street when the garage door is open.
7. Do not leave bikes unattended, and make sure you lock your bikes, even if you are just going to be away for a few moments, and please make sure that your bike has a license and that you are wearing your helmet when riding around the city.
8. Alarm systems are effective if installed by a Shaker Heights licensed company. This information can be obtained from the Shaker Heights Police Department Crime Prevention Unit. Using the alarm system is most important even if going out for a short time period.
9. At night, if you are sleeping on the second floor of your home make sure you keep all doors and windows closed and locked on the first floor of your home.
10. Vacation planning is extremely important. The use of lighting timers and notifying the Shaker Heights Police Department when you are leaving by calling (216) 491-1220 to make a "going away card" is important in securing your home.

If possible, have a neighbor or friend keep an eye on your home and have them pick up the mail and newspapers.
11. Lock your vehicle, even when garaged, and secure all personal property from view.
12. Remember to "always" be cognizant of your surroundings and those around you when walking, jogging, or bicycling.
13. "Always" secure your vehicle when unattended and secure personal property such as radar detectors, GPS devices, cell phones, purses, money, and any other valuables. Items such as those listed should be placed in the trunk area if possible or taken with you.

Remember, every theft is a crime of opportunity. By following the listed tips, it will considerably reduce the possibility of your becoming a victim. Should you have any inquiries, please contact Gerald F. Jankowski, Crime Prevention Officer, at the Shaker Heights Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at (216) 491-1230.