



## **Safety Tips for the Holidays**

The holidays are rapidly approaching and with them come increased travel and shopping. Below are a few tips to help you stay safe this holiday season:

### **Travel Safety:**

- 1) Put away distractions such as cell phones, Ipods, laptops, etc. Many accidents are caused by cell phone use and distracted driving. That call or text can wait; it may save your life. If you need to use the phone, find a safe place to pull over.
- 2) Make sure your vehicle is in good condition.
- 3) Never drive tired. Get a good night's sleep before heading out on a long drive.
- 4) Don't drink and drive...EVER! Don't text and drive...EVER!
- 5) Always buckle up. Many lives are saved every day by seatbelts.
- 6) Allow plenty of time to get where you are going. There are a lot more vehicles on the road during the holidays.
- 7) Obey the rules of the road. Don't drive in an aggressive manner. If someone tries to merge into your lane, slow down and let them.
- 8) Always stay to the right if more than one travel lane. Only drive in the left lane if passing or turning. It's the law.
- 9) Keep your eyes "scanning" at all times. Look for potential hazards like kids or animals near the road.

### **Personal Safety:**

- 1) Never leave gifts or anything of value visible inside your vehicle, even if you cover them up with a blanket, jacket, etc.
- 2) Ladies, some of you may put your purse in the trunk before entering a store. Thieves watch for you to do this in parking lots. It makes their "job" easier if you show them where it is. It is best to take the purse with you and carry it safely.
- 3) Don't carry large amounts of cash. If you choose to, put it in your front pocket and try not to display it when paying for things at the register.
- 4) Don't leave money visible in your purse. You're asking to have a holiday thief pick your pocket if you do.
- 5) Never leave your purse in your shopping cart. It only takes a split second for it to "go missing". Bad guys will follow you around the store and wait for you to turn your back momentarily, and then quickly walk away with your purse and identity.
- 6) Always keep your purse closed. Zip it, snap it, or buckle it shut. If you leave it open a thief could easily reach in and remove your wallet. You won't even know it's gone until it's too late.
- 7) If shopping at night, park in a well lit parking lot. If you feel uncomfortable walking to your car alone, most places will be happy to have security accompany you.
- 8) Be aware of your surroundings. Thieves will try all kinds of ways to get close to you so they can get what you have.
- 9) Walk with confidence. If you appear to be an easy target you probably will be.
- 10) Take friends with you and stay in groups. 5 sets of eyes are always better than 1.

**Home Safety:**

- 1) Don't leave your window blinds up for everyone to see inside as they drive by your house. This can entice a burglar to break in and take all those nicely wrapped gifts from under the tree or that flat screen TV on your wall that he saw on the way to break into someone else's home.
- 2) After Christmas, tear up boxes and put them in a recycle bin before you take them out to the side of the road for trash pick-up. If you put a box by the road that contained an expensive item you're advertising to all you have that expensive item inside.
- 3) Always lock up medications and don't let anyone know you have them. Many homes are burglarized because the resident told the wrong person they are on medication.
- 4) Don't leave your garage door cracked for your pets. It's an easy access point for burglars.
- 5) Leave lights on when you leave at night. Floodlights are a wonderful deterrent for thieves.
- 6) Make your home appear occupied. Leave a TV or radio on so it looks like you're inside.
- 7) Don't post any information that you are on vacation on social networking sites like Facebook. Wait until you return to give details of your trip.

These are a few tips to keep you thinking this holiday season. Some may not apply to you but feel free to pass it on to your neighbors. Be vigilant and watch out for each other. Use your head and don't make yourself an easy target. Remember, if you see something, say something. Have a wonderful holiday season!!

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