

Other considerations

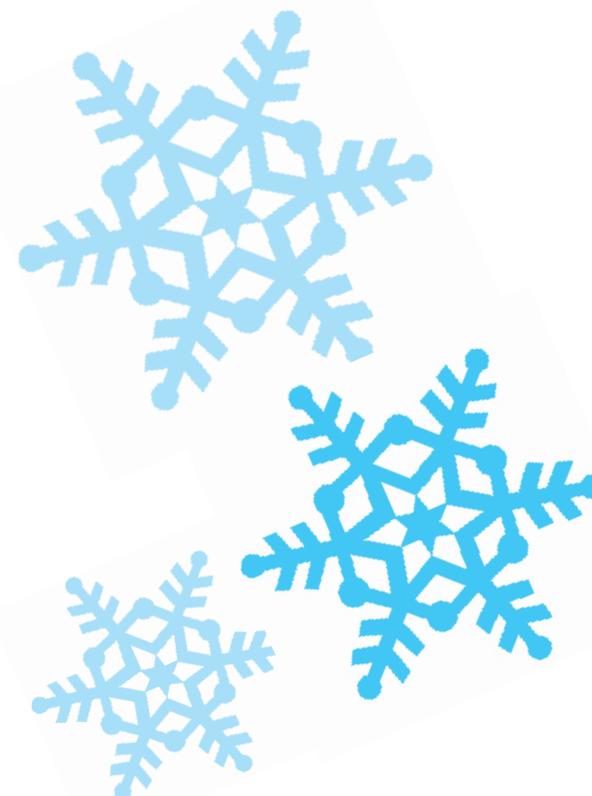
Beyond the holidays

When driving...

- Prepare for winter driving conditions and equip your vehicle with cold weather emergency supplies (blankets, snacks, water).
- Make sure your vehicle has enough fuel in it. You don't want to get stranded.
- Recognize that the holidays can cause extra stress. Keep emotions under control while driving. Give other drivers plenty of space and always leave yourself a route to avoid an accident.
- Buckle up! That means passengers and kids, too!
- Be patient! Give yourself extra time for travel, especially in snow or rain. Even in dry conditions, traffic during the holidays is heavier than normal. It will take longer than you expect to get around.
- Minimize distractions such as talking on the cell phone while driving. Washington law now prohibits talking on cell phones while driving, but hands-free devices are OK.
- Take frequent breaks to avoid fatigue, especially when driving long distances. If you get tired, stop and rest until you're able to drive with full attention.
- If you attend parties where alcohol is served, remember to have a designated driver if you are planning to drink.

After the holidays...

- Pay close attention to bills and report any unauthorized charges.
- Photograph and record the serial numbers of new items and add them to your inventory.
- If you get large, expensive items such as TVs, stereos or electronic games, break down the boxes before taking them out to the garbage to avoid "advertising" what new toys are in your home.



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360.442.5800, emergencies 9-1-1
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Police Satellite Office

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Holiday crime prevention tips



Keeping your holiday safe

Tips for shopping, at home, and at work

Following these few simple tips will help ensure that the holidays are safe for you and your family.

While shopping...

Pack light, watch your valuables

- Protect your purse or wallet and clean out any unnecessary items before leaving home. Don't carry large amounts of cash or extra credit cards. Carry only those cards that you will need to use that day. In a safe place keep a master list of all cards so if your wallet is stolen, they can be reported promptly to the appropriate banking facility.
- Never leave your purse, wallet or cell phone unattended in a public place.
- Don't leave your wallet or purse in the grocery basket. Keep your wallet in your pocket or purse. Hang on to your purse!
- Don't set your wallet down while paying for items.

Parking lot safety

- If it's later in the day, park in a well-lit area.
- Remember to lock your vehicle! Keep vehicle doors and windows locked while you are in it — especially when you are not! Use anti-theft steering wheel clubs or locks as well. A thief is looking for easy targets. Anything you can do to deter them from choosing your car, the better.
- Don't leave valuables visible in your car.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Pay attention to who is around you and what activities are happening. Don't leave the safety of a building or your vehicle until you

have ensured all is secure and safe. Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable with a place or person(s), get away.

- If you are uneasy, ask store personnel (if available) to walk you out to your vehicle.
- Don't leave your purse in the shopping cart while unloading your packages into your vehicle.
- Have your keys out and ready when you return to your vehicle. After putting your purchased items in your vehicle, lock it before taking the shopping cart back to the store or storage area.

Common Sense

- Don't fill up your vehicle with purchased items and then go back to the store to do more shopping. It's possible someone could be watching the parking lot for shoppers who leave purchases in a vehicle, then head back inside to buy more.
- Minimize the number of valuables left in your vehicle and keep valuables, electronics (including cell phones and DVDs), gifts and other "theft attractors" out of sight. Do not leave your purse, wallet or check book in your vehicle!
- Do not leave your car unattended with the motor running or with the keys in the ignition — even for the very short time needed to do a quick errand or pay for fuel. It takes only seconds for someone to steal a vehicle.

Safety in numbers

- Shop with a friend or family member. There is safety in numbers.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages while shopping.
- Role play with children about what should happen in the event you are separated.

At home...

- Make sure all doors & windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, wooden slats, etc.) and use them!
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or that are activated by sensors.
- Place Christmas gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.
- Avoid opening the door to strangers. Use peepholes. Legitimate delivery people will be able to show identification. Ask ahead who will be delivering your packages
- Investigate charities before donating by calling the Secretary of State's office or the charity's main office.
- Be sure to mail cards with checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or a blue US Postal Service collection box. Don't mail money/cash.
- If traveling, use timers for lights and radios while you're away. Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Block Watch member to watch your home. Remember to make

arrangements to stop mail and newspaper deliveries in your absence. **Have a neighbor/friend mow your lawn if you will be gone for long.**

- Only make online purchases from trusted, secure websites. Look for "https" in the web address to verify security. Choose those sites over ones with just "http" in the web address.

At work...

- If you work in a store, try to greet or acknowledge each person who enters. Would-be shoplifters are less likely to try to steal if they know someone is aware of their presence.
- Put away purses and other valuable items such as laptop computers in a secure/locked location that is not visible/accessible to people who enter the business.

