

A Safer Naper --- October is Crime Prevention Month

Naperville is a safe city, but it's not a crime free city, and crime prevention keeps you -- and our community -- safe.

October is National Crime Prevention Month so we feel it's fitting to focus this month's "A Safer Naper" campaign on how residents can prevent crime in our community.

THE 9 PM ROUTINE

This autumn, we're encouraging residents to "fall" into a new routine -- the 9 PM Routine! This nationally-known public safety campaign is designed to help you prevent burglaries and thefts from your home, cars or personal property. Too often these are CRIMES of OPPORTUNITY perpetrated by criminals looking for an easy target. An unlocked car with valuables easily visible to someone on the outside is an irresistible temptation for some thieves. Similarly, a residence with poor exterior lighting or an open garage door might tempt a burglar to take a closer look at your property.

How can the 9 PM Routine help? Humans are creatures of habit. We want you to get into the habit each night of making sure you've secured your home and vehicle and taken proactive steps to combat auto thefts and break-ins. The 9 PM Routine empowers residents to develop their own personal security routines by having a designated time to perform these tasks every night.

Set a reminder for 9 p.m. to go through the following checklist to make sure your property is secure:

- Remove any valuables from vehicles left outside overnight. Remember, NEVER leave your keys or garage door opener in your vehicle.
- Lock vehicle doors.
- Close the overhead garage door.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Don't forget to lock the service door from your garage to your house.
- Turn on exterior lights and leave them on until dawn.

[insert 9pm Routine graphic]

ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS

- Make your home look occupied by using automatic timers or leaving a tv/radio on while you're away.
- Secure your doors and windows.
 - Install deadbolts if you don't have them.
 - Use wooden dowel inside any sliding door/window frames to prevent them from being opened from the outside.
- Trim trees and shrubs so they can't be used to conceal burglars.
- Never leave a spare house key under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other *secret* hiding places.
- Don't put empty boxes from newly-purchased, high-value items (TVs, computers, etc.) out for trash pick-up.
- Make a property identification list and keep in safe place or another location.
 - Note model and serial numbers on list.

- Make photocopies of credit cards.
- Work with your neighbors and look out for one another.
- Don't advertise that your home is vacant. While on vacation, arrange for someone to pick up your newspapers and mail, mow the lawn and put out/retrieve your garbage cans. Have a radio or television turn on and off with a timer, and save the social media posts and pictures for when you return home.
- Report suspicious items or behavior to police immediately.

ADDITIONAL VEHICULAR BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS

Inside Vehicle

- Keep the inside of your car tidy. Consider that shopping bags or boxes containing worthless objects may appear to hold valuables to a would-be thief.
- Whenever possible, don't leave valuables in your car. Take these types of items with you when you exit the car.
- Hide electronics and accessories like adapters and GPS devices. Use cleaning wipes to erase evidence of suction cup mounts.
- If it is necessary to keep valuables in your car, keep them in the trunk. If you have a SUV and the trunk area is viewable from the outside, consider purchasing a retractable cover. If you have a pick-up truck, utilize locked compartments inside the truck or install a storage box in the bed of the truck.
- Place your valuables in your vehicle before you reach your destination and park your car.

Locking Vehicle

- Always keep your parked car locked. Make sure all windows and the sunroof are completely closed.
- Keep your car locked when you are driving. This will reduce your chances of being car jacked or having valuables stolen when you are stopped in traffic.

Parking Vehicle

- If you have a garage and available space, park your vehicle in your garage.
- Park in a well-lit area whenever possible. Put motion detectors on your house or garage to light up the driveway.
- When home, don't leave a garage door opener in your car if your car is parking in the driveway or on the street.
- Avoid parking next to large vehicles, bushes, trees, fences or other objects that can obstruct the visibility of your vehicle. These types of objects can serve to conceal a criminal in action.
- When given a choice, park in an attended lot. Thieves are less likely to commit crime when a parking lot attendant could witness the incident.

Keys

- Never leave keys in an unoccupied vehicle.
 - Even if the car is parked in a locked garage.

- Don't leave the keys in the car when you are pumping your gas or running inside to pay for it.
- Never keep a spare car key inside of your car.
- Consider how easily a burglar could find your car keys if they broke into your home. If a burglar should gain access to your home and they spot the keys, they may load up your car with property and drive off.
- Be mindful that burglaries can occur when residents are home. If items such as keys, wallets and purses are observable from an outside window, a burglar may be tempted to enter your home to steal the items. It is highly recommended that residents take these types of items upstairs or to their bedroom when they retire for the night.

Right Sidebar: Have a Spooky (and Safe) Good Time!

This year, Halloween falls on Thursday, October 31, which means it's time for residents to prepare for little goblins and ghosts to be out for a night of fun in our community. There is no City ordinance in Naperville designating official Trick-or-Treating hours for children, but residents are encouraged to click [here](#) for Halloween safety tips from the Naperville Police Department.

Take me to Halloween safety information [[link to flyer](#)]