

March 2025

A Safer Naper --- Burglary Prevention

Whether you are traveling out of town for spring break or running to the grocery store, it is important to keep your property safe. This month, the Naperville Police Department aims to make Naperville “A Safer Naper” by educating residents on burglary prevention.

In 2024, there were 57 residential burglaries in the City of Naperville. Nearly 60% of those residential burglaries were to unlocked or unsecured homes. That makes locking up and securing your property the number one tip for preventing residential burglary. But being alert for suspicious activity is also a key to preventing this property crime.

SECTION 1: Be Alert & Report Suspicious Activity

Did you know that a burglar/burglary crew will often perform surveillance on a residence they intend to burglarize, sometimes days in advance? Burglars will often take notice of daily patterns and check to see if anyone is home before they strike. This could include ringing the doorbell to see if anyone answers, pretending to be landscapers or solicitors, looking into windows, and accessing backyards to make entry into the residence.

That makes constant vigilance and being alert for suspicious activity one of the most important things you can do to prevent residential burglary! Pay attention to who belongs in your neighborhood and report any suspicious activity immediately to 9-1-1.

Examples of suspicious activity could include:

- Someone walking through a back yard.
- Parked vehicles occupied with one or more people, especially if it is an unusual hour or you don't recognize the vehicle.
- Vehicles moving slowly and without lights and/ or circling your block.
- A person running who does not appear to be exercising, especially at night.
- People casually walking through the neighborhood looking into windows, backyards, etc.
- A beam from a flashlight in a neighbor's home, especially if they are away.
- Open or broken doors or windows.
- The sound of breaking glass or loud noises.

When you call 9-1-1 to report suspicious activity, be calm and ready to provide as many of the following facts as you have available:

- What happened
- Where and when it occurred
- If anyone is injured
- Description of suspect(s)
 - Race/Sex/Age
 - Height/Weight/Hair color
 - Peculiarities (scars, tattoos, noticeable features)
- Weapons (if any)
- Clothing description
- Description of vehicle(s)
 - License plate (most important)

Year/Make/Model

Color

Damage or noticeable features (one headlight, logos, bumper stickers, etc.)

- Time and direction of suspect travel

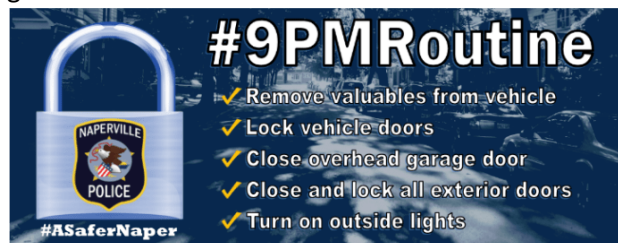
SECTION 2: Make Your Home a Harder Target

- Use solid or metal exterior doors that are properly installed. Never use interior doors, which are not as strong as exterior doors.
- Anchor the strike plate to the framing of the house by using 3" long screws.
- Equip every exterior door with a deadbolt lock (key-in-the-knob locks, by themselves, are insufficient), and engage both the knob and deadbolt locks every time you leave your home.
- Use a blocking device (like a broomstick or dowel placed inside the track) on all sliding windows and doors.
- Never hide a key outside of your home. Leave a spare key with a trusted neighbor.
- Always leave a light on when you are not home.
- Consider purchasing an alarm system.
- Increase exterior lighting and use motion lights and/or timers.
- Pick up trash from your yard and alleyways and collect newspapers and mail daily. If you go on vacation, have a trusted neighbor or friend do this for you.
- Use "Beware of Dog" or "Alarm" decals to deter suspects from entering your home.
- Trim trees, bushes, and other landscaping to ensure windows and doors are not blocked and criminals cannot use them for concealment.
- Use safes to store valuables and ALWAYS keep a record of your serial numbers.
- Whenever you move into a new home or apartment, always change the locks.

SECTION 3: Practice the 9 PM Routine Every Night

The 9PM Routine encourages residents to get into a nightly routine of making your residence and vehicle(s) tougher targets for crime by taking proactive steps to combat thefts and break-ins. It helps you develop your 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.



SECTION 4: Protect Against Ruse Entry Burglaries

Ruse entry burglaries or “distraction burglaries” are an attempt to enter someone’s house through deception, usually with the intent to steal valuables or cash kept in a house. Senior citizens are often targeted by these groups during daylight hours. Offenders usually will pose as outside workers, such as surveyors, utility company workers, tree trimmers or city water department employees and try to lure homeowners away from the front entrance. Once the homeowner is outside the home or isolated to a particular area of the home, another offender will sneak inside to snatch small items like jewelry or cash.

Protect yourself from ruse entry burglaries with these tips:

- If you’re not sure who is at your door, don’t open it.
- Check the identity of the person by calling the company they are purporting to be from. Do not use any telephone numbers provided by the individual, though. Find the company's number online, on a utility bill or through other means.
- Many utility service providers will call prior to arriving at your home. In many cases, the caller will be the technician who will be arriving. Ask them for their name ahead of time.
- Safeguard valuable items and documents in a safe or safe deposit box.
- Keep your doors and windows locked at all times.
- If somebody shows up at your home asking for help or needing to make a phone call, assist them through a closed door or call a friend or neighbor to come and assist.

When to call 9-1-1:

- If you are suspicious or it just doesn’t “feel” right.
- If someone forces entry or enters your home without permission.
- If you notice valuables or money have gone missing shortly after someone has visited.
- Whenever you think a crime has been, or is about to be, committed.