

## CPD shares holiday shopping safety tips

Written by George Browning  
Tuesday, 20 November 2012 00:00 -

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Everyone will soon be in the full swing of the holiday shopping season and unfortunately, thieves love this season too. Below are a few safety tips, offered by the Charlestown Police Department, to help make your holiday season a safe and happy one.

\*Before leaving your home, take a moment to inventory or photocopy the personal & financial information you carry in your handbag or wallet; such as your driver's license, credit cards, & or checks and secure this information in a safe and secure location. This will help you keep valuable contact information if your purse or wallet is lost or stolen. \*Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen, or misused.

\*Before leaving for your shopping trip, consider leaving your shopping travel plan with a relative or trusted friend.

\*Remember, safety in numbers so if possible use the buddy system by shopping with friends or relatives.

\*Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings. Even during daylight hours because crime can occur at anytime.

\*Be careful what you post on-line. Don't alert others you are not at home.

\*Park your car in a well lit area. When you approach your car, have your keys in your hand ready to open the door and lock your doors immediately after entering.

\*Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.

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\*Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. If you do carry cash, carry it in your front pocket or an inside jacket pocket or fanny pack.

\*Consolidate your packages so you're a less desirable target.

\*Hide purchases from view in your parked car. Keep purchases either covered or inside the trunk.

\*Never leave your purse in a shopping cart or on a counter while your attention is distracted elsewhere. This will provide easy access for criminals to grab your bag and run.

\*If you are shopping with small children teach them to go to someone that can likely be trusted, such as a store clerk or security guard if you get separated or lost. Make sure they know their real first and last names as well as your complete address.

\*Never leave a key under the door mat, or flowerpot. Any place you can think of crooks can think of too.

\*If you are going to be out for the evening get an automatic timer for your lights, radio, or TV. Try not to leave a display of gifts where they can be seen from the outside.

\*Avoid leaving the empty boxes to your purchases curbside. Take advantage of taking your boxes to your local recycling center.

\*The holidays are a good time to update or create an inventory of your homes valuables. Take photos or video of the make, model, and serial numbers and store them in a secure place.

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Remember, personal safety first! If you return home to find your residence has been broken into, don't go inside. The criminals may still be inside and crucial evidence can be lost. Go to a neighbor's house and call the Police. Thanks and on behalf of the Charlestown Police Department we hope you have a safe and happy holiday season.