

PERSONAL & SAFETY TIPS

Follow these simple precautions to protect yourself and decrease your chances of being assaulted or robbed during the shopping season:

THE most important rule to remember is your own safety comes first. Everything you own at the moment that you are approached by a robber is replaceable, whether the item is money, your car, jewelry, clothes, etc. Many victims, especially senior women will resist giving up their purses, and unfortunately, in some cases, their attacker drags them or a physical struggle ensues and the woman ends up on the ground sustaining injuries that could have easily been avoided.

ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings and never let your guard down. If you walk with your head down or you are carrying too many packages, you are an easy target. Make eye contact, say hello to strangers, walk with a purpose or walk with someone else and you greatly reduce your chances of being a robber's next victim.

TRUST your instincts. Victims are followed home from the bank, the grocery store, the shopping mall, etc. If you feel you are being followed while driving home, go to a public place instead of leading the robber to your front door. If you are walking go to the nearest public place and ask for help. Many victims will tell investigating officers that they saw the suspect walking in the alley or driving behind them, but still did their normal routine. If you see someone loitering in or near an alley, drive around the block or park your car at the front of the house.

WHEN parking in your garage that abuts an alley, you should always back into your garage rather than pull straight into the garage. By backing into the garage, you have a clearer view of who may be coming into the garage, plus this allows you to drive out of harm's way. Notify someone in your house ahead of time that you are about to drive into the garage. He or she can then meet you outside or turn on additional lights.

LIMIT your losses. Don't carry excessive amounts of cash or credit cards. Keep cash and keys on your person, not in a wallet or purse. Carry a "dummy" purse or wallet with a small amount of money. Don't carry social security cards, health insurance cards, driver's licenses, keys or irreplaceable pictures in your wallet or purse. When these items are stolen they can be used to commit other crimes such as a burglary because your address is now known or your keys were taken and identity theft because your social security card was stolen.

MAINTAIN your personal space. If someone moves inside your comfort zone, quickly get away from that person. Many robberies happen in bus shelters or on gas station parking lots, where a stranger approaches you for directions, the time, etc.

CARRY a charged cell phone at all times, scream fire rather than help if needed, keep your keys in your hand always ready to enter your car or house and consider carrying pepper spray as a way to defend yourself if ever attacked.

Scams Aimed at Churches

According to the FTC, con artists are targeting African-American churches with so-called opportunity scams. Emphasizing a shared faith, culture, or concern for the community to win their trust, these scammers offer the opportunity to use equipment or services that supposedly won't cost the church a thing. Their goal is to get access to your church's bank account.

[Get tips on how to avoid these scams](#)

Mass Marketing Scams

Plenty of consumers have been fooled by mass marketing fraud schemes. Did you know that businesses are a target, too?

[Visit the FBI website to learn more](#)

Cash Advance Scam

Be sure to check your receipts when leaving your favorite malls. Did the cashier add a cash advance to your purchase without your knowledge? This scam involves enterprising cashiers adding a small cash advance to your purchase then pocketing the extra money. The cash advance is usually small enough to go unnoticed (\$20.00 on a \$100.00 purchase). Prior to stepping out of line check your receipt to make sure it doesn't say "Cash Advance". If this happens to you immediately ask for a manager or supervisor. If you discover this occurred after you have left the store it will be very difficult to prove or prosecute. It is still very important to report that you were scammed to the stores management. Reporting it will help the store monitor these employees' actions and help catch them in the act.

Home and Auto Security

Home

[Security Survey](#)

Vehicle

District Five has experienced an

What is your score? Take a survey and get tips on how to maintain a secure home.

Help for Homeowners Facing Foreclosure

Do you think you might lose your home? You are not alone. For questions or to seek help, call the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council at 414-921-1090.

The City of Milwaukee is committed to helping our neighborhoods remain healthy for generations to come. We are coordinating with various organizations, government agencies and private lenders and reaching out to homeowners facing foreclosure.

Protection of Tenant Rights During Foreclosure

Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett is promoting a new state law that recently took effect that protects the rights of renters of foreclosed properties.

increasing trend of motor vehicle theft and theft from autos in its surrounding neighborhoods.

Vehicle Theft Prevention Tips

Car Alarm

Steering Wheel Immobilization Device (The Club etc..)

Brake Immobilization Device

GPS tracking devices (On star or Lo-jack)

Park in your garage if you have one, and lock all garage doors

Park in a well lit area monitored by security or video cameras

Do not leave your keys unattended around strangers.

NEVER leave your vehicle running and unattended.

Theft from Vehicle Prevention Tips

Place any valuables in your trunk prior to arriving at your destination.

Do not leave anything with value in plain sight. This includes something as simple as loose change.