<u>Residential Burglary and Theft Prevention</u>

Montgomery County Police want to take this opportunity to remind our community members of safety tips they can follow to help make their homes less likely to be targeted for a residential burglary.

Every day police are called to respond to reports of burglaries and thefts from vehicles where windows and doors have been left unlocked.

- The first line of defense against becoming a victim is to install good quality **deadbolt locks** on all exterior doors and any doors from attached garages and consistently use those locks.
- Even at this time of year when it is particularly pleasant to leave windows open, all first floor windows should be locked.
- The use of blinds and curtains decrease visibility into your home.
- Door areas should all be well lighted and the use of motion detector lights is also beneficial.
- Trim back trees and shrubs near windows and doors that could provide a hiding place while someone is making illegal entry.
- Never leave a house key under a mat, in the mailbox, or above your door.
- Always lock the house door from an attached garage and keep garage doors closed and locked.
- Never leave any items visible inside a car, even one parked in your driveway.
- Keep ladders and tools inaccessible.
- Record all serial numbers of electronic items, and keep a list of all credit card numbers.
- Use a safe deposit box to store valuable papers, seldom used jewelry, and collector coins.
- Store expensive jewelry in safe deposit boxes, take pictures of the jewelry, get the jewelry appraised. If you store jewelry in your home, DO NOT store jewelry in typical places in the master bedroom.
- Make sure you have your house number close to the front doors of your house. Dark numbers on light trim are easiest to read. During an emergency, this could save precious moments.
- If you have alarm system on your home, use it.
- Remove all valuables from sight near windows and glass doors in your home, especially purses and wallets.
- Report anything even potentially suspicious to police. Never be afraid that you are bothering police, let officers decide whether someone or something poses a danger.
- If you return to your home and discover that it has been burglarized, don't touch anything, get out, and call police immediately.
- Neighbors should get to know one another and organizing a Neighborhood Watch group can increase everyone's safety.

Everyone wants to feel safe in their own homes and neighborhoods, but not taking that safety for granted and not ignoring the fact that crime can and does happen anywhere, can put you in the right frame of mind to make security the priority it should be.

Montgomery County Police offers FREE home security assessments by appointments. Please contact Officer Dana Stroman, Community Services Officer – 2nd District, Montgomery County Police to schedule your appointment 240-876-1277.

A burglary takes place in the U.S. every 14.3 seconds according to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program Crime Clock.

Report all suspicious persons, and vehicles to Police!
Emergency 911   301-279-8000 Non-Emergency