

‘MAKE SAFETY A HABIT’

DEP's Safety Series
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Safety & Loss Control Program



This newsletter is dedicated to Personal Protection during the Holiday.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday and “Make Safety a Habit!”

How to Protect Yourself While Shopping

- * Avoid shopping alone. Try to shop with a friend or relative
- * Park your vehicle in a well-lit area. Put radar detectors and cellular telephones out of sight.
- * Know your surroundings. Keep an eye on the people in front of, as well as behind you.
- * Carry your purse close to your body. Do not swing it loosely. Do not flash large amounts of cash.
- * Walk with confidence. Avoid talking to strangers.
- * Approach your vehicle with your keys already in your hand.
- * Do not to carry too many packages. Place all packages out of sight in your vehicle, preferably in the trunk.
- * Keep your vehicle doors locked and your windows shut.
- * If you see anything suspicious or if something just doesn't feel right, leave immediately and contact security or police.

If you go shopping with children, keep the following advice in mind for everyone's safety:

- * Ensure that any children with you know your cell phone number. Give cards with contact information to any who don't.
- * Make a plan with children in case you get separated. Have a central meeting place, and review it with your children who they can turn to for help if they find themselves alone.
- * Go over the dangers of strangers so that they know who not to talk to or follow.

How to Protect Yourself in a Parking Lot or Garage

- * If you must leave a key with a parking attendant, leave only your vehicle's ignition key. Do not leave anything attached to it with your name and address.
- * Do not park next to a van's sliding door.
- * Change from high heels to low flats or even sneakers when leaving work. They are better to run in.

- * At night, leave your office or building in the company of others. Do not leave alone after dark. If possible, have someone from your building security escort you, or call for assistance.
- * Look around your vehicle for any suspicious activity. If you see someone loitering around your vehicle, walk past until they leave.
- * Do a quick scan of your vehicle's interior before unlocking the door. Be sure to look in the back seat and under the vehicle.
- * Keep your doors locked and windows shut.
- * Be cautious of anyone approaching your vehicle, whether passing out leaflets or asking for donations. Always leave the car windows up.

How to Protect Yourself While Walking at Night

- * Avoid walking or running alone at night. Instead, go walking or jogging with a friend.
- * Do not use headphones while walking, driving or jogging.
- * Always walk in well-lit areas.
- * Avoid the use of short cuts.
- * After dark, keep away from large bushes or doorways where someone could be lurking.
- * Always stay near the curb.
- * If someone in a vehicle stops and asks for directions, answer from a distance. Do not approach the vehicle.
- * If followed, go immediately to an area with lights and people.
- * If needed, turn around and walk in the opposite direction, your follower will also have to reverse directions.

How to Protect Yourself While Using An Automated Teller Machine (ATM)

- * Try to avoid using an ATM by yourself. Either take someone with you or only use an ATM when others are around.
- * Avoid using an ATM after dark. If you must, choose one that is well lighted and does not have the tall bushes nearby.
- * When you arrive at an ATM, look around. If you see anything that makes you uncomfortable or anyone who looks suspicious, do not stop. Either use an ATM at a different location or come back later. Notify the authorities.
- * Have your access card and any other documents you need ready when you approach an ATM. While you are fumbling with a wallet or purse, you are an easy target for a thief.
- * If someone else is using the ATM when you arrive, avoid standing right behind them. Give them enough space to conduct their transaction in privacy.



- * Even while using the ATM, stay alert to your surroundings. Look up and around every few seconds while transacting your business.
- * Protect your Personal Identification Number (PIN). Do not enter your PIN if anyone else can see the screen. Do not use spouse, children, maiden, or pet names for PIN numbers. Shield your PIN from onlookers by using your body.
- * When your transaction is finished, be sure you have your card and your receipt, and then leave immediately. Avoid counting or otherwise displaying cash. As you leave, keep a look out. Be alert for anything or anyone who appears suspicious. If you think you are being followed, go to an area with many people and call the police.
- * If you think you are being followed, drive immediately to an area with lots of lights and people. If possible, drive to the nearest law enforcement office.
- * Obtain and use a cellular phone to call for help. In Florida, dialing *FHP anywhere in the state from a cellular phone will connect you with the nearest Florida Highway Patrol station.

This information was provided by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, Office of health Services. Sources from this article: Attorney General of Florida, National Crime Prevention Council, No Nonsense Self Defense and WebMD.

How to Protect Yourself at a Gas Station

This unique setting allows thieves to catch their victims by complete surprise— when they are pumping gas or paying their tab inside the station. Most of the time, gas station customers leave their car doors unlocked and items like purses and wallets are often left in plain view. A thief is able to drive up next to the victim's car, open an unlocked door, and grab any valuable within reach. Then, the thief quickly drives off. It happens in a matter of seconds. But these thefts can be easily prevented if the appropriate precautions are taken.

- * Pick stations that are well lit and have video surveillance cameras at the pump.
- * Always remove your keys and lock the doors while you are pumping gas.
- * Keep valuables out of plain view in your vehicle and lock the doors even if you are going inside for a moment.
- * Pay attention to your surroundings.
- * Avoid using your cell phone.

How to Prevent Carjacking

- * Keep doors locked and windows shut.
- * Do not stop to assist a disabled motorist. Instead, contact a service station or police.
- * When stopped at a light, leave enough room between you and the car in front that you could make an escape.
- * Be suspicious of anyone approaching the car with fliers, asking for change or directions. Be ready to leave carefully, even if it means running a traffic light or stop sign.
- * While driving, if struck from behind or in any suspicious way, say in your vehicle with the doors locked and windows closed until the police arrive. Activate your vehicle's emergency flashers.
- * If you are suspicious, get the other vehicle's license number and drive to the nearest police station or a well-lit area with lots of people.



Have a Happy Holiday