



# Partners In Crime Prevention

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John Lovick Sheriff

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## Inside This Issue

**Partners In Crime Prevention– A Message from the Sheriff** page 1

**Holiday Shopping– Protecting Yourself From Theft** page 2

**Holiday Shopping– More Safety Tips** page 2

**ID Theft– Protect Your Identity During the Holidays** page 3

**Holiday Party Guide** page 3

**Presents Under the Tree– Protect Them From Burglars** page 4

## Partners In Crime Prevention– A Message from the Sheriff

To our Partners in Crime Prevention:

First, to all of you who contribute every day to making Snohomish County a safer place to live, work, and play, I say, “Job well done!”

We started our Sheriff’s Neighborhood Watch and Precinct Partnership program about a year and a half ago with high hopes about the level of community interest in the program, and we sure haven’t been disappointed. So far, more than 170 neighborhoods have participated in Neighborhood Watch orientation, and we keep growing every month. Many of you continue to attend our monthly Precinct Partnership meetings to receive ongoing crime prevention training and assistance from Sheriff’s Office deputies.

We know that Neighborhood Watch really works. By promptly reporting suspicious activities and improving home security you can reduce the risk of becoming a crime victim. What’s more, your neighborhood will *feel* safer because you know that others are looking out for you.

I know that organizing and maintaining an active Neighborhood Watch group requires hard work and commitment, especially when you’re just getting started. Remember, you’re not alone in your effort. I encourage you to attend Precinct Partnership meetings, where you can share your

experiences and draw inspiration from other Neighborhood Watch captains. If there are ways the Sheriff’s Office can better support your efforts, I encourage you to email us at [neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org) to let us know.

To me, you are all local heroes, changing the world by making a difference in your neighborhood. Please know that your efforts are noticed and tremendously appreciated.

On behalf of everyone at the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office, I wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

*John Lovick*  
Sheriff Snohomish County



## Holiday Shopping- More Safety Tips

*If you have one of those "wonderful" remote car locks for your car, be careful in the mall parking lot.*

- *When you leave your car, lock it the old fashioned way, with the key in the lock, don't use the remote. The bad guys use scanners to pick up your remote's frequency, and then open your car with their own remotes.*
- *Keep your keys safe. If you lose your keys, you lose your car. With your remote, the bad guys can use the panic button to easily find your car.*



## Holiday Shopping- Protecting Yourself From Theft

The busy holiday shopping season has returned. When you are at the mall looking for those precious gifts, take the following precautions to protect yourself from becoming a victim:

- Don't display large sums of cash in public. Be discreet about the money or other valuables you are carrying.
  - Be alert in public restrooms. If anything seems amiss or if a group of people is loitering in the area, leave quickly and find another facility.
  - Stay alert in crowds to protect your valuables. A thief can use the cover of the crowd to make a quick getaway after stealing your wallet or shopping bag.
  - Don't keep your keys in your purse. If your purse is stolen, the thief will have your address and keys to your home. Keep your keys in your pocket without an ID.
  - Try to park as close to the entrance of the mall or store as possible. In a parking garage, park on the level that leads directly to the mall, so you can avoid elevators or stairwells. Stay alert for people standing behind parked cars or pillars. At night, park under a light whenever possible.
  - Consider using the mall's valet parking service if it offers one.
  - Make a note of your parking spot
- so that you don't have to wander around the parking lot after shopping.
- Have your keys in your hand before leaving the mall and walk purposely to your car. Make sure nobody is in the car before entering, and lock the doors immediately when you get inside.
  - If you are leaving a mall alone at night, request a security escort to your car.
  - Don't leave packages visible on the seats or floor of your car. Use the trunk.
  - If you take packages to your car trunk and want to go back to the mall, move your car. Most newer vehicles have a trunk release inside the car (in the glove box or by the driver). If the thief sees something that you have just purchased that he wants, he can easily break a window and open your trunk.
  - At an Automated Teller Machine (ATM), choose one that is located inside a mall, grocery store, or well-lighted location. Withdraw only the amount of cash you need. Shield the ATM keypad from anyone who is standing near you so they cannot view your transaction or obtain your PIN. Do not throw your ATM receipt away.
  - Keep cash in your front pocket.



## ID Theft— *Protect Your Identity During the Holidays*

ID thieves need to steal personal information to commit ID theft. Once a theft is made it's downhill all the way for you the victim. According to the Attorney General's Office, Washington State is Number 8 in the nation for ID Theft.

Here are some ways to avoid becoming an identity theft victim:

- When you make purchases with your credit card, put the receipt in your pocket. Do not carry it in your shopping bag.
- Do not give your Social Security number, mother's maiden name or account numbers to strangers who contact you, especially by phone, Internet or mail.
- Pay attention to what time of month your bills arrive. If they don't arrive on time, call the creditor and verify your address.
- Put strong passwords on your credit card, bank and phone accounts.
- Don't carry your Social Security card. Leave it in a secure place such as a safe bolted to the floor in your house or a safety deposit box.
- Don't carry credit cards or ID cards you don't need.
- When ordering new checks, pick them up at the bank instead of having them mailed to your home.
- Tear or shred charge receipts, copies of credit applications, insurance forms, physician statements, bank checks and statements, expired charge cards and credit offers you get in the mail.

### Shopping Safely Online

- **Know who you are dealing with.** Confirm the seller's phone number and physical address.
- **Know exactly what you are buying.** Read the product description closely. Look out for words indicating product is in less than mint condition. Watch out for products with "too good to be true" prices.
- **Know what it will cost.** And pay with credit card. Be sure the transaction is through a secure web page.
- **Check out the terms of the deal, such as refund policies and delivery dates.**
- **Keep a paper trail.** Print and save the product description and price, the online receipt and any correspondence.
- **Never email your personal information.**
- **Check the privacy policy.**

### Holiday Party Guide

*With the holiday party season upon us we want to remind everyone not to drink and drive. If you will be hosting a party here are some tips to ensure that your guests do not become involved in an alcohol related crash:*

- *Ask guests to appoint a designated driver before the evening begins.*
- *Offer a variety of non-alcoholic beverages for the designated drivers or for those who choose not to drink alcohol.*
- *Prepare plenty of food so guests will not drink on empty stomachs.*
- *Invite guests who are compatible so that no one feels left out - lonely or unfriendly people often drink to excess.*
- *Avoid too many salty snacks-they tend to make people thirsty, so they drink more.*
- *If preparing an alcoholic punch, use non-carbonated base fruit juice - alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream faster with a carbonated base.*
- *Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol to guests.*



# Presents Under the Tree— *Protect Them From Burglars*

You have safely transported your gifts from the mall. Now they are in your home ready to wrap and sit under your tree. This is a time of year when burglars steal Christmas gifts from homes. You can improve the security of your gifts by following the following steps:

- Always secure and lock your doors and windows, even if you are just popping out or when you are in the back garden - about one in four burglaries happen simply because the householder left windows or doors unlocked.
- Make sure your security lights are in working order and put internal lamps on timer switches to come on when dark if you are away.
- If you have a burglar alarm, use it.
- Don't hide your house keys near a door. Burglars know all of the secret hiding places
- Don't leave Christmas presents under the tree in full view of burglars who may be peering through windows - keep them in a secure place until the big day.
- Don't put your empty boxes from Christmas presents (or any new purchases) out until your recycling collection day

and make sure you break up the boxes and secure them together - the boxes and wrappings provide burglars with just the information they are looking for to see what new gadgets and items await them inside.

- Note down the serial numbers of all electronic goods such as TVs, videos, computers and camera equipment and keep the list out of sight in a secure place. Also photograph valuable items such as jewelry.

## Auto Theft Prevention Checklist

- All car doors locked
- All windows rolled up
- All personal belongings have been removed or stored in the trunk
- Removable stereo taken with you (if you have one)
- Your vehicle is parked in a well-lighted area
- Your vehicle is parked in a high-visibility location (avoid isolated areas)
- Anti-theft device on (Club, alarm system, kill-switch)

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**Tip Lines:**

- Phone: 425-388-3845
- Sheriff's Website: [www.co.snohomish.wa.us/SheriffRpts/AnonymousTips/default.htm](http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/SheriffRpts/AnonymousTips/default.htm)

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