

When shopping on-line

Use only reputable companies and websites that have proper security features. Look at the address in the browser window. Secure sites have an address that begins with HTTPS:// (The "S" stands for "secure.") Be wary of pop-up ads that lead you to another website or ask for personal information or credit card or bank account numbers. When possible call and order your merchandise on the phone rather than entering your information on the internet.

When in doubt do not enter personal information GIFT CERTIFICATES

Chapter 200A: Section 5D. Gift certificates; validity; expiration

Section 5D. A gift certificate, as defined in section 1 of chapter 255D, sold or offered to be sold shall be **valid for not less than 7 years after its date of issuance**. The date of issuance and the expiration date shall be clearly identified on its face, or, if an electronic card with a banked dollar value, clearly printed upon a sales receipt transferred to the purchaser of the electronic card upon the completed transaction, or otherwise made available to the purchaser or holder of the electronic card through means of an Internet site or a toll free information telephone line. **A gift certificate not clearly marked with an expiration date or for which the expiration date is not otherwise made available as provided in this section shall be redeemable in perpetuity.** Once an expiration date has been reached, the issuer of the gift certificate shall not be subject to section 7. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, upon a gift certificate being redeemed for at least 90 per cent of its face value, a consumer shall make an election to receive the balance in cash or to continue with the gift certificate.

MAKE THE HOLIDAYS SAFER THROWING A PARTY?

- * Have some liquid refreshments that are non-alcoholic available.
- * Encourage some in attendance to be non-drinking designated drivers.
- * Arrange transportation for those who become intoxicated.
- * Know your limit.
- * Eat high protein food that slows the absorption of alcohol.
- * Only time will dissipate alcohol in the bloodstream.
- * NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE.
- * Prepare plenty of foods so guests will not drink on an empty stomach, and avoid too many salty foods which tend to make people thirsty.
- * Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol.

BEFORE YOUR GUESTS DEPART

Stop serving alcohol one hour before the party ends, because only time sobers an individual who has been drinking. If some guests have too much to drink, drive them home or arrange for alternate transportation. Don't let anyone who is obviously intoxicated drive. If they insist, take their keys, ask for help from other guests, or temporarily disable the car. If all else fails, call the police. Remember, you can be held responsible!



Police Commissioner John Barbieri



HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY
HOLIDAY SEASON



Don't Let a 'Grinch' Ruin Your Holiday Season!

With the care and giving of the holidays also comes opportunity for muggers, burglars and thieves. Don't let what should be a joyful time of year turn to sorrow by becoming an easy victim. Although there is no infallible method to prevent crime, there are many tactics and methods you can use to significantly reduce the odds.

Where People are Victimized:

Home and shopping are two of the primary areas of risk during the holidays. Home; because of the many gifts that accumulate for the season. Shopping; because there are so many more doing it during the holiday season. Identity theft is a serious problem any time of the year, but with the increase of shoppers during the holiday season it is even more.

IF YOU ARE OUT FOR THE EVENING

- * Turn on lights and a radio or the TV so it appears that someone is home.
- * Lock all doors and windows while you are out, even if you are gone for a few minutes.
- * Do not place packages or gifts near windows or in a high-visible sites.
- * Visit ATM's only at well-lighted and populated locations; visit during day light hours if possible. If anyone is loitering, or onlookers make you uncomfortable go to another ATM. Stand so that those behind you can not see your PIN as you enter it.

WHEN YOU'RE SHOPPING

- * Don't let your guard down just because you are in a hurry.
- * Park in well lit spaces and as close to the store as possible. When arriving during the day park under or as near to a light as possible, it may be dark when you leave. Lock your car doors, and hide packages in the trunk or under seats.
- * Do not carry large amounts of cash; pay with a credit card or check if possible.
- * If you have to use cash do not advertise how much you have by removing all of it from your pocket when checking out at the register.
- * Do not overburden yourself with packages when walking to your car or while shopping.
- * Don't leave items unattended.
- * Move your car to another parking space after putting packages away in your car trunk or out of plain view.
- * Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- * Stay alert while loading items into or out of the vehicle or arranging packages. If someone approaches, and you feel threatened, get in and lock up until they leave the area; if they loiter, drive away.
- * If you take your children shopping, keep a close eye on them and teach them to go to a police officer or a store security guard if they get separated or get lost

GOOD SHOPPING PRACTICES

- * Check the refund and return policy. Massachusetts law requires them to post it.
- * Read the fine print on advertisements.
- * Check delivery dates and rates.
- * Review warranties.
- * Keep your receipts.

CALL 911 IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, OR SOMEONE ACTING SUSPICIOUS



AFTER SHOPPING

- * Leave the mall before closing time. It is safer to walk out of the mall with other people.
- * When hurried or in a crowded shop, make sure you get all forms of ID and credit cards returned to you before leaving.
- * Use an escort or mall security if you have a lot of packages or if you are leaving the mall after closing.
- * Check under your car as you approach it as this is a common spot for criminals to hide. Check the interior of your car.
- * After opening gifts, break down cardboard boxes of expensive electronics and cut them up for recycling