



# Spring Valley Village Police Department

## Holiday Safety Tips

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**Darrell Bond, Chief of Police**

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The Holiday Season is traditionally a festive and eventful time of year. It is also a time when busy people become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. With everyone out and about, the criminals will attempt to put a damper on your holiday spirit.

Here are a few safety tips and suggestions you can use while at the house or traveling around the city to help ensure a safe and happy holiday season.

### **Home Safety:**

1. Make sure to leave some type of interior light on inside the house to appear that someone is home. Leave a lamp or television/radio on. Have lights on timers, or where you can control them via your cell phone.
2. When parking your vehicles make sure to take all your valuables, presents, etc. in the house with you. This includes backpacks, diaper bags, sports/gym bags, and briefcase. Don't give the criminals a reason to break into your car. This also applies to parking lots.
3. **"LOCK YOUR DOORS"** to your house and vehicles. Also, if you have an alarm system be sure to "arm" it. If you have one use it. When locking your vehicle, make sure that you hear the "chirp" or "horn" sound acknowledging that the vehicle is locked.
4. If you plan on leaving for a couple of days or a month, please call the Spring Valley Village Police Department to be placed on the "House Watch List".
5. Light up the exterior of your house. Don't create dark spots, "hiding spots", or give the appearance that the house is vacant.
6. Be vigilant! If you see a vehicle driving around suspiciously or parked somewhere that appears suspicious, **"Call the Police Department Immediately"**. Let the police investigate the situation.

### **Shopping/ Parking lots/ General Safety:**

1. Be aware of your surroundings! Try not to talk on your cell phone while going out to your vehicle after shopping, leaving a restaurant, or leaving a bank. Someone could be following you!
2. Never leave your purse in the shopping cart while loading your vehicle. Don't place it in the front seat either. Have the purse on your person.
3. Try not to leave anything valuable in your vehicle. If you do, try to conceal it best as possible. Try to drop it off at the house before going to another location. Keep in mind that criminals are watching people leave certain stores to see what they have purchased. Many times people have made a large or expensive purchase and left it in the vehicle as they went to another store. The criminal followed the person, broke into the vehicle, taking the expensive item.
4. Try to leave an event, restaurant, or functions in a group. Watch to make sure everyone gets to their vehicle safely. Larger number of people equals added safety.
5. During this time we also have to keep a close eye on our children. With the number of people and distractions at the malls, carnivals, festivals, and shopping centers, the probability of your child getting lost increases. Get with your family to plan a meeting point in the event someone should get separated. If family members have a cell phone, make sure it's fully charged and the ringer is on. Now most cell phones are equipped with some type of locating feature that you may want to activate on your child's cell phone.
6. Avoid dimly lit areas to walk or park in. Let other family members know where you will be going and when you plan on returning.

Taking some of these suggestions will help ensure a safe and fun holiday season.