



December 2012

Dear Off-Campus Terp,

With finals approaching and with the holiday season in full swing, I am writing to share some important crime prevention and safety tips from the Prince George's County Police Department. I hope this information serves as a reminder of what you can do to reduce your chance of being the victim of a crime and to help you remain safe during the holiday shopping season.

At your home and your UMD home away from home:

- Keep doors and windows locked, regardless of whether they are upper or lower level windows/entrances.
- Before you leave your home, check to be sure that all windows and doors locked.
- Require identification from all strangers (includes delivery/repair persons and police officers). If you're not sure of a person's ID, call the person's company/agency to verify.
- Never leave notes/messages on your door since they advertise that you're away and when you plan to return.
- Don't ever tell anyone that you are home alone.
- Use blinds and drapes for privacy.
- Ensure bushes are trimmed back to remove hiding places for potential criminals.
- Ensure your home has good interior and exterior lighting for safety and protection.
- Always have car/house keys in hand before exiting secured areas.
- Keep hands free of excessive packages/bulky items when you're travelling to/from your home.
- Never enter your home if you see that a door or window has been forced. Get to the nearest space place and contact the local police immediately.
- Never place a key over your doorway or under a flower pot, etc. If you think you may need access to a spare key, consider leaving a key with a trusted friend or neighbor.
- Don't display presents under the tree if they can be seen from a window.

If you will be away for all / part of the winter break:

- Stop mail and newspaper deliveries.
- Place lights on a timer to give the appearance of someone being home.
- Take valuable items such as jewelry, money, laptops, iPods, TVs, etc., with you to avoid potential theft.
- Double-check to be sure all windows and doors are locked and secured before you leave.
- Ask a friend or a trusted neighbor to keep an eye on your residence while you are away.

When Out Shopping:

- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Walk in well-lit, populated areas; avoid cut-through paths and short-cuts.
- Try to park in busy, well-lit areas and avoid parking beside large vehicles which can obstruct views.
- Lock your car doors and place all valuables in the trunk or under the seats.
- Avoid carrying large sums of cash. Pay with a check, debit card, or credit cards.
- Keep your purse closed and close to your body and/or carry your wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.

Important Safety Resources (Program these numbers into your mobile phone)

Prince George's County Police 911 from mobile phone 301-352-1200 (non-emergency) www.co.pg.md.us/Government/PublicSafety/Police/

University of Maryland Police 301-405-3333 or #3333 www.umpd.umd.edu

I hope you find this information useful and informative. If you have any questions, or if my office can be of assistance, please feel free to contact me. All the best for success during final exams and for a fantastic winter break!

Sincerely,

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