



**THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICE FORCE**

Kyle Kroll
Police Chief



COMMUNITY RELATIONS BUREAU
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NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ORGANIZATION
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Crime prevention and safety tips

As a general rule of thumb:

1. Remember first and foremost, call 911 for emergencies.
2. Call 973-763-3000 for non-emergencies, or to report suspicious activities.
3. Join your Neighborhood Watch Organization!

Safety for your home

When you are not home:

- Make your house appear to be occupied when you are away.
- Keep your porch/exterior lights on at night to deter crime around your home (*you can buy a light switch timer for your outdoor lights*).
- For extended periods away:
 - Temporarily stop mail and paper deliveries
 - Turn off the ringer on your phone and lower the volume on your answering machine (a ringing phone can reveal that you are not there to answer it)
 - Ask a friend or family member to check on your home and go inside periodically if you'll be gone for more than a day or so. This will make it seem like someone is home.
 - Have someone leave a parked car in your driveway.
- Put timers on your lights, TV, radio to turn on every night.
- Consider leaving a radio "on" (tune to a talk radio station), even during the day.
- For the exterior of your home, use motion sensors on your lights.

Even when you are home:

- Use an alarm system. Doors, windows, and also the screens should be armed. Put up signs or decals indicating that you have an alarm system protecting your home. If you can't afford a system, the use of signs can still be a deterrent.
- Make sure all sensor lights are working; also look into audible motion sensor alarms.
- Shut and secure windows on lower floors when you are not going to occupy these sections of your home for a good portion of time, screens are not effective.
- Lock all doors or any unlocked access points (e.g., pet doors).
- Make sure your doors are hung properly and hinges and screw hardware are complete (no missing parts). If the wood of the jam is compromised, create new holes and reinstall hardware. The space between the door and jam should be no more than 1/8 inch.

- Secure sliding windows and sliding doors with solid security bars that you jam behind the moving section; or, use steel pins that prevent opening or lifting doors/windows off of their tracks.
- Keep bushes and trees trimmed back from your house. Make your entry ways and walks to your home visible from the street or your neighbors' homes.
- Do not leave valuables/purses/laptops/wallets/car keys within sight from the outside of your home (through windows or doors), especially upon first arrival home; they can be grabbed quickly if robbers know what they want and where to get it.

Some good practices (Action steps):

- Make your home address number visible from the street for first responder personnel.
- Keep your tools and such locked in locked garages or sheds.
- Make sure all second floor roofs and windows are not-accessible from the ground (consider proximity of trees, ladders, etc).
- Make an inventory (including a video?) of personal property. Include serial numbers for items, and physical descriptions.
- Consider a diversion safe for valuables—a safe disguised as an everyday item (can of soda, cereal box, etc).
- Is the outside of your home well-lit all night (sensor lights and audible alarms mentioned above)?
- Consider entry doors that are made of steel, solid core wood (at least 1-3/4 inches), or metal-wrapped wood.
- Do not hide extra keys outside of your home; give copies of keys to a trusted neighbor or friend instead.
- Share your garage code with a trusted friend or neighbor.
- Shred or destroy all mail with any identifying information before discarding it.

(From *CrimePreventionTips.org*, <http://www.crimepreventiontips.org/home-safety/preventing-crime-part-1.html>):

Burglars will focus on specific hiding areas for valuables. Target areas include master bedrooms including dressers, small safes, jewelry boxes, bathroom counters, desks, under beds or mattresses, and inside toilet tanks. A preventative measure would be to use diversion safes (designed to look like standard household products), which have the look and feel of real, usable items.

In your neighborhood

- Join your neighborhood watch group.
- Meet the people who live nearby; get to know their names, their cars, and exchange phone numbers.
- Keep a list of this contact information near a phone, so you can call anyone on your block should the need arise. This is the purpose of neighborhood watch.
- Watch for “familiar strangers”—people who linger or hang around, or come and go on your block frequently (on foot, bike, or in cars/trucks). Such individuals might be casing the neighborhood and looking for an opportunity to commit a crime.
- Call the police and let neighbors know if you see someone unfamiliar at their home.
- Once again, an important rule of thumb is: ***Don't be afraid to call the police to report suspicious behavior.***

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While you are “out”

- Always bring your cell phone.
- Be aware of your surroundings, specifically people and passing vehicles.
- Do not walk alone.
- Use extra caution in poorly lit areas at night.
- Consider carrying a personal safety device or a loud, shrill security alarm or whistle. Or use your voice.
- Limit usage of personal electronic devices such cell phones, iPods, and PDA's.
- If confronted by a criminal who is armed with a weapon, comply with their demands—your “stuff” isn't more valuable than your life.

In your car:

- Never leave your car running/unattended.
- Never leave the keys to your vehicle in the car, even if inside a locked garage.
- Keep your doors locked, even while driving.
- Leave enough space between your car and the cars around you, especially at lights or stop signs. Leave your car in gear; if the need arises for to leave quickly, you have room to maneuver.
- Always roll up your windows and lock the car, even if it is parked in front of your home.
- Never leave valuables/electronics in plain view, even if your car is locked. Keep them out of sight.
- Always park in well-lit areas, when possible.
- Install a mechanical device that locks the steering wheel, column, or brakes, even if the device does not work. Appearance is everything.
- Investigate the purchase of a vehicle anti-theft device (such as OnStar, LoJack).
- Documents containing personal information should not be left in your vehicle. This would include your driver's license, credit cards, or title to the vehicle.
- If you must leave your key with a valet, attendant, or mechanic leave only the ignition key.
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) should be etched on windows, doors, fenders and trunk lid.
- Copy your license plate and vehicle information on a card and keep this with you. In the event that your vehicle is stolen this information will be needed for a police report.

Tips to safeguard yourself against Identity theft

GUARD YOU PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Never give out your Social Security Number.
- Commit, if you can, all passwords to memory only.
- When using an ATM, make sure no one is hovering over you and can see you enter your PIN.
- Closely monitor the expiration dates on your credit cards and contact the issuer if you don't receive a replacement prior to the expiration date.

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BEWARE OF PRIZES AND AWARDS

- Beware of Email or telephone offers that announce prizes or awards, especially if the offer asks you for personal information or financial account numbers.
- Match credit card receipts with your monthly bills and check your monthly financial statements for accuracy.
- Watch for your monthly financial statements and bills. If you don't get them when expected, contact the sender.

REPORT LOST CREDIT CARDS

- If your credit, ATM or debit card is lost or stolen, federal law limits your liability for unauthorized charges. Your protection against unauthorized charges depends on the type of card..and when you report the loss. Report the loss immediately to the police and card issuer. Many companies have 24 hr toll free numbers for such emergencies.

PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER

- Choose strong passwords ad PINs. Choose words, symbols and numbers that no one would be able to guess even if they were privy to other part of your personal information. Change passwords often.
- Protect your computer a strong and regularly updated firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware program will provide most of the protect you need.
- Beware of Phishing scams. Phishing involves emails sent to you, asking you to verify certain things such as passwords, account numbers or credit/social security details. Any email seeking this sort of information should be an immediate red flag for you. Do not respond. Contact your service provider instead.
- When you get rid of your computer, delete all of your saved information. Ideally, restore it to the factory settings. This can usually be explained in your owner's manual or found online.
- Check the security symbols on any online shopping site. If the lock icon encryption is not there, co not give your credit card details.
- Review your consumer credit reports annually.
- Residents can contact SOPD Community Relations Sgt. Acevedo at [973-763-3000 ext 7802](tel:973-763-3000) with any questions. As always, share this and help spread the word.

Sgt. Adrian Acevedo
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