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Raleigh Police Department Community Newsletter

This newsletter is produced by the Public Affairs Unit of the Raleigh Police Department. It provides Raleigh citizens with crime prevention tips, seasonal information, and upcoming RPD community activities.

The holiday season is always a special time of year. It is also a time when busy people may become somewhat careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. We can never be too careful, too prepared, or too aware. This holiday edition of the RPD Community Newsletter features tips to keep you safe for a happy holiday season.

Please share this information with family, friends, and neighbors. The Raleigh Police Department wishes you a safe, happy, healthy and peaceful holiday season.

GETTING MORE PACKAGES DELIVERED THIS TIME OF YEAR?

It's a sure sign the holidays are here when packages of all shapes and sizes litter doorsteps and apartment lobbies. This year, with more people than ever shopping from home during the pandemic, those piles of boxes are bound to tower even higher. It's a ripe opportunity for package thieves.

- **Give the delivery service special instructions.** Some services let you indicate where to leave your package if you're not home. Using the shipping companies' apps, you can instruct drivers to leave a package at a back door, with a building superintendent, or in a coded lockbox.
- **Keep tabs on your packages by signing up for alerts.** Most delivery companies now offer text, email, and/or mobile app alerts so that you know when a delivery will be made and can adjust your own schedule accordingly.
- **Solicit your neighbors to help**—If your neighbors are home during the day, ask them to bring in your packages—or at least give the side eye to strangers who approach your property.
- **Set up a hiding spot**—Don't leave your porch bare around the holidays. Theft is a crime of opportunity: Thieves usually grab packages they can easily spot. Position plants, chairs, or that inflatable snowman close to your door. While a potted plant won't block a TV box, it can help hide smaller boxes from street view.
- **Invest in a camera**—Security cameras pointing at your front door, hallway or driveway is better than no camera at all. A security camera will serve as a great deterrent for criminals and it helps to prevent package theft. It can also help law enforcement to identify the thieves.
- **Insure Your Upcoming Packages**—Insuring your precious holiday parcel will guarantee you reimbursement if, unfortunately, your delivery was stolen or lost before you lay your hands on it.



Please call 911 if you have experienced a crime or if you want to report any suspicious activity.

KEEP THOSE PACKAGES OUT OF SIGHT

Loading up on all those gifts is a sign of progress in the holiday shopping season. But if those packages are left out in the open after they have been placed in the car, your car has become a likely target for thieves.

You can save yourself and your family a lot of frustration, stress, and interruption to your daily life by taking some simple precautions to reduce the risk of you or your vehicle becoming a target by following these steps:

- Lock your vehicle
- Close all of your windows
- Parking in a well-lit area
- Never leaving your engine running and vehicle unlocked while you run into your home, a convenience store, or anywhere else

One of the most common types of theft is that of valuables from your vehicle. Theft from autos is strictly a crime of opportunity that can be prevented if you take away the opportunity. Thieves generally won't waste their time breaking into cars without valuables in plain sight.

DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR NEW GIFTS TO THIEVES



BEWARE OF PERSONAL QUESTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

If you took your Grandmother's maiden name on your Mom's side, what would your last name be?

Many times when we are on social media, we see what we think are harmless quizzes or questions. The reality is that these are personal questions that could make you a vulnerable security risks!

DO NOT respond to this kind of stuff.

This is how criminals hack into your accounts. Never share anything that's also an answer to one of your security questions.

Burglars know that many households have new, and oftentimes expensive items in their homes following the holidays - especially items such as new computers, televisions, cameras and other electronic equipment.

In too many cases, residents make it easy for burglars to figure out which homes to target by putting boxes that identify their new gifts in plain view. Avoid becoming an easy target for post-holiday burglars by not leaving boxes for new electronics and other items outside for several days at a time.

Instead, break down any boxes you are throwing out. Think about keeping broken-down boxes inside – in a garage, for example, until the evening before your regular recycling pick-up.

Some burglars actually look inside garbage/recycling cans for evidence of holiday gifts. And, of course, if you see someone suspicious, call 9-1-1.