Top 12 Tips for a Safe Holiday

Friday, December 13, 2024
Posted by Breck Scott

Caddo Parrish Sheriff's Office Wants to Protect You During the Holidays!

Tip #1

The holidays are a great time to get to know your neighbors

The holiday season is an excellent opportunity to get to know your neighbors, including those who live next door, across the street, and behind your house. When neighbors look out for one another, they can help monitor suspicious activity, making the community safer.

Tip #2

Parking Lot Safety Tips for Holiday Shoppers

Always lock your vehicle and keep valuables out of sight, ideally in the trunk or a locked compartment. When parking or walking before sunrise or after sunset, choose well-lit areas and keep your keys ready in hand. Stay aware of your surroundings by looking for any suspicious individuals, vehicles, or situations. Before entering your vehicle, check the inside and outside for any signs of tampering or burglary. If you notice anything unusual, please get in touch with your local law enforcement agency. For the Sheriff's Office, you can call (318) 675-2170.

Tip #3

When you're out shopping for the holidays, stay alert to your surroundings

When you are in crowded places, stay alert for potential thieves. Avoid overloading yourself with packages to maintain visibility and mobility, which can help you steer clear of threats. Be cautious of strangers who approach you for any reason. The holiday season attracts con artists who might try to distract you to steal your money or belongings. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry and carrying large amounts of valuables when possible. Never leave your personal belongings unattended. Keep a secure record of all your credit card numbers at home for extra precaution.

Tip #4

Shop with Friends, there is safety in numbers

Recognize safety in numbers and arrange to shop with friends and family instead of going out alone. Ensure everyone stays vigilant and looks out for one another.

Tip #5

Tips for Holiday Shopping with Children

When shopping with children, it's essential to keep a close eye on them at all times. Consider teaching them to approach a store clerk or security guard if they get separated from you. Ensure they know their first and last name so they can provide that information to someone who can help them. Additionally, give your children a contact phone number to carry with them in case they become lost.

Tip #6

Holiday Safety Tips for Online Shoppers

Online shopping is becoming increasingly popular; however, it comes with some risks. To protect yourself while shopping online, taking certain precautions is essential. The National Cyber Security Alliance recommends ensuring you have a security suite installed and updated, including a firewall, anti-virus, and anti-spyware software, before making any online purchases.

Make sure to keep your operating system and web browser updated. Before entering any personal or financial information during an online transaction, check for signs that the website is secure. Look for a closed padlock icon in your web browser's address bar and ensure the URL begins with "https" rather than "http." These indicators show that your purchase is encrypted and secure. Lastly, avoid using unsecured wireless networks when making online purchases.

Tip #7

More Tips for Shopping Online

Before providing personal or financial information:

Review the website's privacy policy.
Ensure you understand how your information will be stored and used.
Avoid sending cash through the mail or using a money-wiring service, as you will have no recourse if something goes wrong.
Print and save records of your online transactions, including the product description, price, online receipt, terms of sale, and copies of any email correspondence with the seller.
Review your credit card statements as soon as you receive them to check for unauthorized charges. If you notice any discrepancies, report them immediately.

Tip #8

Keeping your home safe during the holidays

Take extra precautions by locking all windows, sliding doors, and entrance doors when leaving your home for any period. Keeping all entry points secured while you're at home is also advisable. Consider using timers for indoor and outdoor lights, and think about doing the same for a television or radio to create the illusion that someone is home.

Avoid placing gifts or valuable items in plain view from outside your windows. Close blinds, shutters, drapes, and curtains to prevent burglars from seeing items they might want to steal. If someone knocks at your door and you don't recognize them, you are not obligated to open it. Teach your children to only open the door to someone with your knowledge and permission.

It's also important to note that the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office has reported incidents where criminals have entered homes through doggy doors or other animal access points.

Tip #9

Staying informed helps increase home security year-round

Following the Sheriff's Office on their website or Instagram provides year-round information. You can also find details about upcoming classes that help protect your home and personal safety. Additionally, you can enhance your home security by signing up for the free online neighborhood safety service, AlertID, or by starting a Neighborhood Watch program. For more information, visit the Caddo Parish Sheriff's website: www.caddosheriff.com.

Tip #10

Let someone you trust know when you're traveling during the holidays

Inform a trustworthy person of your whereabouts and expected return. Ask a neighbor or another dependable person to watch your house and collect your newspapers and mail.

Tip #11

Watching the weather is an important safety factor for Holiday Travelers

In the Sierra, severe winter weather poses a significant safety hazard. Stay updated on weather conditions and prepare for inclement weather accordingly. Carry tire chains, ensure sufficient gas in your tank, and exercise extreme caution while driving. Always be vigilant for pedestrians.

Tip #12

When celebrating the holidays, celebrate responsibly

Many people celebrate the season by attending holiday parties with family and friends. It's essential to enjoy these gatherings responsibly so that this joyful time doesn't become tragic. Be mindful of how much you drink, and remember, don't drink and drive. Arrange for a sober ride if you plan to consume alcoholic beverages. The Sheriff's Office recommends that you prearrange transportation for your safety.