SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS

OUT & ABOUT

WALKING

- Avoid walking alone at night.
- Always plan your route and stay alert to your surroundings.
- Have a companion join you.
- Stay away from buildings and doorways; walk in well-lit areas.
- Have your key ready when approaching your front door.
- Don’t carry large, bulky shoulder bags; carry only what you need.
- Avoid carrying weapons, they may be used against you.
- If you are attacked on the street, make as much noise as you can. Do not pursue your attacker.
- Call 911 and report the crime as soon as possible.

IN YOUR CAR

- Keep your car doors locked, whether you are in or out of your car.
- Keep your gas tank full and your engine maintained to avoid breakdowns.
- Travel well-lit and busy streets. Plan your route.
- Don’t leave your purse on the seat beside you; put it on the floor where it’s more difficult for someone to grab it.
- Lock packages or bags in the trunk. If items are out of sight, a thief will be less tempted to break in to steal them.
- When returning to your car, check the front and back seat before entering.

SHOPPING

- Shop with a friend whenever possible.
- Always park in well-lit areas.
- Carry your purse very close to you, don’t dangle it from your arm.
- Never leave your purse in a shopping cart. Don’t leave it unattended.
- Don’t carry more cash than needed, and don’t display large sums of cash.

NEED HELP?
Emergency dial 911
Non-emergency Sheriff Dispatch
320-251-4240

Stearns County Sheriff’s Office
320.259.3700
sheriff@co.stearns.mn.us
**AT HOME**

**Visitors**
- Never open your door immediately. Install and use a peephole.
- Never let a stranger into your home.
- Ask for proper identification from delivery persons or strangers.
- Ask to see credentials from persons representing themselves as workers from utility companies, package delivery services, etc. Don’t rely solely on a uniform or a stranger’s claims.
- If a stranger asks to use your telephone, offer to place the call for him or her yourself.
- Be wary of unsolicited offers to make repairs to your home. Deal only with reputable businesses.

**Security**
- Lock your doors and windows. Install deadbolt locks.
- Do not hide your keys under the mat or in other conspicuous places.
- Vary your daily routine.
- Don’t leave notes on the door when going out.
- Keep your home well lit at night, inside and out.
- Leave lights on when going out at night.
- Never give out information over the phone indicating you are alone or that you won’t be home at a certain time.
- Keep an inventory with serial numbers and photographs of valuable appliances, antiques and furniture. Leave copies in a safe place.
- Don’t hesitate to report crime or suspicious activities.

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**Going Away**
- Use a timer to turn lights on and off when you are away for an extended period.
- Notify neighbors you trust when going away on a trip.
- When you are away remember to cancel deliveries such as newspapers.
- Arrange for someone, a neighbor’s child perhaps, to mow the lawn if need be.
- Arrange for your mail to be held by the Post Office, or ask a neighbor to collect it for you.
- If you arrive at home and suspect a stranger may be inside, DON’T GO IN. Leave quietly and call 911 to report the crime.

**Banking**
- Use direct deposit for your government or pension checks. Criminals may know when these checks arrive and pick that day to attack.
- Never withdraw money from your bank accounts for anyone except YOURSELF. Be wary of con artists and get-rich schemes.
- Store valuables in a Safe Deposit Box.
- Never give your money to someone who calls on you, identifying himself as a bank official.