



**BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY SERVICE DIVISION
CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM**

BURGLARY PREVENTION MODULE

***PRESENTED BY
P/O NICK ORTIZ***

E-mail: nick.ortiz@bridgeportct.gov

**Telephone# 203-576-8278 (Office)
203-650-7419 (Cell)**



Protect Your Home

You don't have to be up to date on the latest statistics to know that crime is on the rise all over the country. Unfortunately, the fact of crime increase is already established. Rather than dwell on statistics it is far better that we make ourselves aware that we personally can do something about this steadily increasing blight on our society. It may sound harsh, but too many of us are guilty of making crime too easy, whether by lack of knowledge or by indifference or by sheer carelessness.

Crime prevention should be the first priority for all of us.

Burglary is one of the most frequent crimes, that is, the breaking and entering of a home at any time where property is either stolen or damaged. Unless you have been directly involved in an attack on your home it is doubtful that you know the distress and fear it can cause. Your greatest asset is not necessarily your jewelry or porcelain but your own privacy.

Burglary – What can you do about it?

Below is some useful advice on how to protect your home:

General

1. Take a look at your front and back doors; each is as important as the other. All outside doors should be fitted with locks that are up to American Safety Standards of a minimum one inch throw, case hardened, flush mount, with an anti shim, anti kick device. The strike plate should be mounted to the door with at least 2 ½” to “3” screws. The catch box should be a metal high (security catch box).
2. Your security lock wouldn't do any good on a hollow core door. Your door should be a solid wood door of a good grade wood 2” or 44 mm minimum and the frame should also be of a high quality. The door should fit snugly into the frame and if there is a gap a breezeway guard should be installed. The hinges on the door should not be exposed; they should be either welded or pinned.

3. A peephole that is of high enough quality for good resolution should be utilized to view your exterior. A good door with a good security lock and bad glazing is like having no door at all. If you must have glass panels in your door, please utilize a good quality polycarbonate such as lexan or lexguard, which are extremely high impact resistant. Also be mindful of the 40” rule of security. This has to do with a perpetrator punching in your glass panel and reaching the thumb turn on key lock on your lock. This generally applies to rear doors where most residences utilize glass panels, and therefore become the easiest entry points.
4. When you leave the house, even if it is only for a few minutes, remember to lock your doors and windows properly. It takes only a few minutes for a burglar to go through your home. A high degree of burglaries occur either through unlocked windows or doors, and present the best opportunity for the burglary to occur. An unlocked door, window or garage door is exactly what the criminal is looking for. Don't forget to cue word here is opportunity, and burglars are opportunists.
5. Think about keys. Never try to hide them. You may think you have found the perfect hiding place, don't believe it. The criminal knows all the hiding places. Take keys with you. If you are going away for any period, let your neighbor or a trusted friend know and let them have the keys. By the way, don't forget to cancel newspapers and have someone pick your mail. These are dead give a ways that no one is home.
6. Another good piece of advice is to put your interior and exterior lights on a time-set to go on and off at random intervals to create an illusion of movement and occupancy.
7. Leave a radio on preferably on a talk station. The volume should be modulated so that anyone listening at a door will believe that someone is in conversation.
8. Don't advertise, except to a trusted neighbor that you are going on vacation.

9. Try to ensure that your windows are fitted with suitable security locks, and don't forget to use them. Criminals like entering a home through windows but don't like breaking glass if they can help it, it attracts attention. Good quality window locks will put them off. There are numerous types for wooden or metal windows. Consider fitting them on all ground floor windows and those accessible from either a flat roof or drainpipe. If you have a patio door, please consider additional locks top and bottom. In the case of sliding doors or windows, use a security bar along with security locks.

Etch and identify your valuables. It helps you and the police, if anything is stolen, it will make it possible to get your property back to you.

Another more important aspect of etching and marking your equipment and valuables is that pawn dealers are even some fences will not handle this material because of the heat it brings down on them. Mark and photograph all your valuables with your drivers license number and keep a list either in your safe deposit box or securely hidden.

With items of jewelry make a note of hallmarks, stones, settings, marks, scratches, and blemishes. Photograph from more than one angle.

Security of Double Glazed Door and Window Installation

Double glazed windows and doors, whether as replacement units or the original fittings, would be made and installed with security in mind.

Both aluminum and uPVC units have attracted the attention of criminals in the past and the following suggestions are made for the minimum specifications.

1. The frame members of all uPVC doors and windows should be suitably strengthened by means of full length aluminum or galvanized steel inserts. All hinges and locking devices should be screwed into the frame.

2. The glass should ideally be installed from the inside and then wedged or packed to stabilize the frame. Packing should be inserted at every locking point near each frame mounting screw. This is particularly important for replacement units in that the gap between the fixed frame and the wall must be packed at each screw.
3. For maximum safety and security, glazing should be a high quality laminated glass which will hold together if broken, preventing injury and keeping out the criminal and the weather.
4. Windows should ideally be fitted with a key operated device either as part of the cockspur handle or as an additional unit to prevent the window from opening.

***A note on pinning windows – Windows can be pinned cheaply by drilling a hole at a slighting downward angle and using an eight penny nail. Counter sink so that you can access rapidly in case of emergency.**

Security Lighting

The safety and security of all premises can be greatly enhanced by the use of exterior lighting. Criminals do not like to work in well lit areas because:

1. It spotlights their activities.
2. Through the premise of natural surveillance it makes identification very easy.
3. Because of the increased risk of observation.

Lighting can be decorative, a home improvement or an amenity, not only increasing security, but also making it safe for other users thereby lowering the risk of liability for the homeowner.

There is an extensive range of lighting units on the market, both in style and lamp type. The final choice is personal preference but certain points need to be considered.

- a. Control by photo electric cells will ensure maximum efficiency and economy by switching on only when the light level warrants it. Other switching devices are available which are infrared movement sensitive.
 - b. The choice lamp type will vary according to the area to be lit and the potential nuisance. Low running cost effective lamps may initially be more expensive but are most effective in the long run.
 - c. A light outside the front door is a must, while a few other well positioned exterior lights will make sure that the thief has no hiding places. A lighting system which is improperly placed can be a hazard to the positive user because many times the glare and blinding effect of the light will deter any attempt at surveillance, and will be used to the perpetrators advantage. You must also be aware of the amount of light that trespasses on areas where light is not wanted, such as your neighbor's bedroom window.
 - d. Outside lighting is particularly beneficial at the back of your home which is normally dark. Besides deterring intruders lighting also helps in the identification and surveillance of night time callers. Security lights should enable you to distinguish features and clothing colors at a minimum of 25 feet.
4. 90% of break-ins occur through a rear entry way. Very few break-ins occur when someone is home.

A totally darkened house inside and out is an open invitation to the burglar. Part of your strategy in using light for protection should be to arrange that there is always some light showing from your windows at night.

Landscaping and Home Security

The modern trend is for us to barricade our perimeter in, either through fencing or high bushes for the sake of privacy. In addition, we are of the belief that more is better so besides the fencing and bushes, we add trees and bushes to the interior perimeter, covering windows and hampering any dark, uninviting shadowed areas around our homes which are many times very user friendly for the criminal offender.

In doing this, we are putting ourselves at risk in two ways:

1. We are creating an ideal opportunity for the criminal to operate because of the issues of darkness and shadows, plus the denial of unnatural surveillance. These issues not only hamper law enforcement in doing their job, but also put you and any person you invite onto your property at risk of assault and/or injury.
2. You also put yourself at a liability risk because of the issue of foreseeability. What the courts are saying now a days is that you are duty bound to protect and safeguard anyone whom you invite onto or uses your property.

Many of these cases of premise liability have gone to the Supreme Court and the home or property owners have lost, so precedence has been set. Be very mindful of what the boundaries of your perimeter are and take appropriate steps to minimize the risk for both your safety and that of the potential user.

This can be done at minimal cost to you by following some simple rules:

- a. Trim all bushes away from your windows, and cut to a minimum of 24" below your windows. Thin the bushes out so as to preclude any attempt at hiding, and to create natural surveillance into these locations.
- b. Trim all bushes along your perimeter down to a minimum of 36" and a maximum of 42". Do not abut bushes to pedestrian walkways or path ways to eliminate assault spots in these areas.
- c. Trim any trees away from light sources and any branches hampering your view from either your up or downstairs windows.

- d. The best type of fence for your perimeter is chain link 9 gauge, from 6 to 8 feet high.
- e. Always be mindful of the fact that the only way you can deter criminals is to spotlight them and their activities.

You can circle the wagons but if there is no one to defend the wagon train you may as well hand over all the goods. In other words, if people don't take an active role and utilize a zero tolerance attitude to all crime and disorder you will always be fighting the same perceptions and problems.

Remember crime prevention is also about attitudes and self responsibility. You are the first line of defense. There is a tremendous amount of strength and power in an organized community, but you must also be upfront and proactive rather than reacting to problems as they occur.

