

## ***Protect Yourself from Burglary***

According to the FBI, a burglary occurs in the United States every 15.4 seconds. The majority of home and apartment burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are away at work or at school. Burglars tend to choose unoccupied homes with the easiest access, the greatest amount of cover, and the best escape routes. Following is a list of suggestions to minimize your risk of being burglarized:



- Keep all your doors and windows closed and locked
- Use heavy-duty deadbolt locks with one-inch throw bolts for all standard exterior doors
- Use blocking devices and anti-lift devices, such as through-the-door pins or upper track screws, on all sliding glass doors
- Secure all accessible windows with secondary blocking devices, so that they open no more than 6 inches for ventilation
- Get to know your adjacent neighbors and agree to watch each other's home
- Pick up newspapers and flyers for your neighbors, and ask them to do the same for you
- Use light timers to establish a pattern of occupancy
- Install bright exterior lighting to eliminate hiding places around the front of your home
- Use motion sensor lights on the rear of your home
- Alarm systems are effective deterrents with visible signage
- Use highly visible burglar alarm or crime prevention decals, beware of dog decals, or block watch decals, especially on ground accessible windows
- Identify valuables by engraving an identification number on them
- Photograph and record the serial numbers of valuables
- Obtain a home safe and use it to protect your valuables
- Keep garage doors closed even when you are home
- Lock any door connecting the garage to your house; don't rely on an electric garage door for security
- Contact the Denver Police Department district station in your neighborhood for more information

## **Keys to Prevention**

- ***Be a Hard Target:*** deadbolt doors, block sliding doors and secure windows.
- ***Be a Good Neighbor:*** know your neighbors, agree to watch each other's homes, and pick up mail and newspapers.
- ***Be Bright, Be Safe:*** use interior and exterior lighting to make your home unattractive to burglars.
- ***Visual Deterrents:*** use alarm decals, security signs, dog warnings, and neighborhood watch stickers to deter burglars.
- ***Never Offer an Invitation:*** don't let answering machine messages, newspapers, open curtains & other indicators invite burglars when you're away.

## ***If You're the Victim of a Burglary, Help Police Identify the Burglar***

If you return home and unexpectedly find a door or window open and realize you have been burglarized, do NOT enter the residence; instead, immediately call the police. While you wait for the police, do NOT touch anything, do NOT sneeze or cough on top of any potential evidence, do NOT walk in any area that may contain evidence, and do NOT attempt to clean up any mess -- you may compromise important evidence. When the police arrive, point out anything out of the ordinary. A drinking glass out of place, a cigarette butt, a discarded garment, a drop of blood, a mask, a glove, or any item that does not belong in your residence or that you do not recognize may help convict your burglar! Similarly, any items or areas that the burglar may have touched or handled, such as jewelry boxes, may help identify him.

### ***Typical Sources of a Burglar's DNA or Fingerprints***

- Entry tools: screwdriver, crowbar, hammer, bat, etc.
- Blood and/or fingerprints on window glass or on doorframes
- Items that may have been moved or touched
- Cigarette butts, half-burned cigarettes
- Beverage bottle or can, a drinking glass or cup
- Half-eaten food
- Toothpicks and other items that may contain saliva
- Feces or urine
- Semen and clothing/bedding that may contain semen
- Hair and items that may contain hair
- Hat, mask, bandana, or other headgear
- Gloves, Eyeglasses
- Tissues, Kleenex, handkerchief
- Discarded bandage
- Skin scrapings, dandruff, fingernail clippings, etc.
- Tape, cord, rope
- Used condom



### **DNA Evidence**

- ***What is DNA?*** DNA is a molecule contained in the nucleus of virtually every cell in the human body. It contains a unique genetic code that can be used to positively identify criminals, including burglars. A person's DNA is the same, regardless of whether it is from blood, saliva, semen, sweat, hair, etc.
- ***Does everyone have his/her own unique DNA makeup?*** Yes! With rare exceptions, such as identical twins, each person's DNA is different. Therefore, DNA collected from a crime scene can help catch burglars
- ***Has DNA ever been used in court to convict a burglar?*** Yes! The Denver District Attorney's Office has used DNA successfully in the past to convict burglars and aggressively prosecutes burglars in our community.