

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



Crime Prevention In Your Homes

Frequently Called Telephone Numbers:

Emergency.....911

Non-Emergency.....441-6000

Police Department.....441-7204
Service desk

Crimestoppers.....475-3600

Records Information.....441-7210

Victim Witness Unit.....441-7181

Family Crimes Unit.....441-7220

Internal Affairs.....441-7222

Chief of Police.....441-7237

Mayor’s Office.....441-7511

Neighborhood Hot Line.....441-6300

Lincoln Fire Department....441-7363

Fire Prevention Bureau.....441-7791

Lancaster County Sheriff....441-6500

Nebraska State Patrol.....471-4545

Lincoln-Lancaster County...441-8000
Health Department

Lincoln Water System.....441-7571

Lincoln Electric System.....475-4211

Animal Control.....441-7900

Attorney General Office.....471-2682
Consumer Fraud Division

County Court Office.....441-7291

Better Business Bureau.....436-2345

Hospitals

Bryan LGH East.....489-0200

Bryan LGH West.....475-1011

St. Elizabeth Community.....489-7181
Health Center

Veterans Administration.....489-3802
Medical Center

Your Police Teams

Center Team.....441-7751

Northwest Team.....441-6555

Northeast Team.....464-6007

Southwest Team.....441-7754

Southeast Team.....441-7755

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT



A nationally accredited law enforcement agency



DEAR CONCERNED CITIZEN:

I want to extend my appreciation to you for becoming involved in crime prevention in our community. Citizen participation can have an impact on crime and improve the safety of all in our community.

There are three basic elements necessary for crime to occur:

1. **DESIRE**
2. **ABILITY**
3. **OPPORTUNITY**

As you will learn through reading this booklet, crime occurs when a person with criminal **desire** and **ability** to commit the crime, seizes the **opportunity** to get what he/she wants. There is little the police and the community can do to change the person's desire or ability, but we can reduce the opportunity within our environment. This can be accomplished by better securing our homes, marking our property for identification, learning personal safety and becoming involved with our neighbors and the police.

Through the use of crime prevention techniques, crime can be reduced and Lincoln can maintain its excellent quality of life for all of us.

Again, thank you for your support and participation in crime prevention.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas K. Casady".

Thomas K. Casady, Chief of Police

INTRODUCTION TO NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The Neighborhood Watch Program establishes a formal network for concerned citizens to communicate with their neighbors and the police regarding crime related problems. The program asks you to be involved with your neighbors, and their property, by becoming more aware and alert to the activity on your street. You will be the eyes and ears of the Lincoln Police Department.

The security of the city and its citizens depends upon the people themselves. No police department can effectively protect life and property without the support and cooperation of the citizens it serves. Every citizen should be a person who watches their neighborhood and reports criminal and suspicious activity to the Lincoln Police Department. It is important to realize that criminals find it difficult to operate in areas where citizens take an active role in reducing criminal opportunity and reporting suspicious activity. As you go about your daily routine you have the opportunity to casually observe the neighborhood. Such observations are useful in alerting neighbors and police to suspicious persons and activity in the area.

THE BLOCK SECURITY COORDINATOR

The Block Security Coordinator acts as the leader of the Neighborhood Watch Program for their particular area and serves as the group's liaison with the police department's Crime Prevention Group. The coordinator must be a resident of the geographic area represented by the watch group. The Block Security Coordinator and watch group members have no legal authority on behalf of the City of Lincoln or the Lincoln Police Department. Block Security Coordinators and all members of the Neighborhood Watch Program are advised to limit their participation to the observation and reporting of any suspicious or criminal activity.

DUTIES OF THE BLOCK SECURITY COORDINATOR

The duties of the Block Security Coordinator are to contact new neighbors as they move into the area and encourage them to become a Neighborhood Watch member. The coordinator is responsible for insuring the ongoing success of the group. The coordinator can keep their group aware of new crime trends occurring in their area by passing on information received through electronic notification. Group meetings are not mandatory but they do promote social interaction which is important in maintaining a cohesive group. Please go to the Lincoln Police Department public website at www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police to receive up to date crime data and information pertinent to your neighborhood.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal. There are many people, such as service workers and utility workers, who have legitimate business within a housing area. There are however some criminals who would try to commit crime in your neighborhood by relying on a resident's lack of concern that they are there. If there is someone who is not familiar to the neighborhood who is loitering or is going to a house known to be empty it should raise a feeling of doubt. If a resident observes any activity that gives them feelings of mistrust or appears to be questionable they should call the police. The situation may not be an emergency so calling the Lincoln Police Department at 441-6000 is fine. Every phone call will generate a response from an officer in your area of town. The Lincoln Police Department would rather investigate a suspicious activity than get a call when it is too late. Your phone call could save a life, prevent an injury, or stop a criminal act.

DRUG ACTIVITY

One form of activity that is plaguing our neighborhoods is drug use and the manufacture of methamphetamine. The manufacture of "meth" can easily occur in a variety of locations. Household chemicals such as drain cleaner, starter fluid and solvents like paint thinner are used. Other dangerous materials including phosphorous, lithium, sodium metals and anhydrous ammonia may be mixed and heated with the chemicals. The chemical reaction of these mixtures will result in toxic fumes and heat.

There are several activities that on their own may not be suspicious but when occurring together may indicate drug use or manufacture. These include:

- Frequent visitors at all times of the day or night.
- Frequent late night activity.
- Windows blackened out or curtains always drawn.
- Paranoid or odd behavior, or extensive security.
- Chemical odors coming from their house, garbage, or detached buildings.
- Coming outside to smoke.
- Setting out garbage in another neighbors collection area.
- What have your other neighbors heard?



MAKING A REPORT

To make a report to the police department you should call **441-6000**, or if it is an emergency be sure to call **911**. Remain on the phone with the dispatcher and be prepared to give them your name and address (though not required). They will also want to know the activity and location of what you are calling about. Please try to provide descriptions of persons and vehicles— this information is being passed on to officers who are responding to your call.

PERSONAL SAFETY

For Children

Children should learn that they must be cautious when around strangers. They must know the basic danger signs and the techniques for dealing with situations encountered when alone. Discuss with your children just who is a stranger. Explain that strangers who are identifiable through their profession such as police, firefighter, nurses, etc. are strangers who can be trusted. Emphasize that the child must be sure of the authenticity of the person (i.e. uniform, police cruiser, location of encounter, etc.) before they trust them.

Safety Tips

- Most strangers act friendly, but there are some who are not friends. Even adults can't always tell who the friendly stranger are.
- Make certain your child knows he/she is not obligated to comply with the requests from strangers other than those identified by you as trusted persons.
- Friendly strangers offering gifts, candy or seeks help to find a puppy or ask directions are not to be considered as friends. The child's first reaction should be to leave the scene and go to a safe place. They should tell the nearest authority (teacher, parent, friend, police officer or babysitter).
- Never accept rides from strangers, go near or get into their car for any reason.
 - a. If the stranger keeps following, run or walk in the opposite direction of the car.
 - b. If they are still being followed, run and yell to attract attention.
 - c. Find a busy store or a house where someone you know lives.
 - d. Later, with a trusted adult to help, report any such persistent follower to the police.
- Children should never get so close to a stranger that they can be touched.
- Discuss and show your child where they can find emergency help on the way to school. Encourage children to walk with a friend if possible, but to take suitable precautions when walking alone. If possible, the child's route to school should not lead past abandoned buildings woods etc. when they are cut off from the public view.
- Children should know their full name and address, but never give their name or address to a stranger. Children should understand that if they are lost to know where to look for help. Parents should emphasize the kinds of people to look for in different situations when lost.
- Instruct your child to never allow a stranger into your house. If a stranger knocks on the door, a child should get a parent or older sibling to answer it. Children should never tell a person on the phone or at the door that they are alone.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Most crimes are crimes of opportunity. A dangling handbag invites a purse snatcher. An unlocked window invites an intruder. If you eliminate the opportunity, you could avoid the crime. Here's how:

At Home...

- When changing address, change your locks. Install a deadbolt and a door viewer
- A woman living alone should not put her name on the mailbox and if possible have her phone number unlisted.
- Always lock your doors and windows, draw shades at night and leave a few lights on.
- Don't leave a key hidden outside, They're too easily found.
- Instruct children and babysitters not to give out any information about who is home or who is out and for how long.
- Always check the identification of any repairperson, salesperson or police officer who wishes to come inside.
- Be cautious around elevators; if you are at all suspicious of another passenger, wait for the next car, or stand next to the control panel and get off if the need arises.
- If you suspect your home has been broken into, don't go in or call out. Call the police from a neighbor's home.

In Your Car...

- Look for a well lighted parking place and lock up your vehicle. Preplan if you know you will be returning to your vehicle after dark.
- If you have a cell phone, carry it and have it turned on.
- Have your key in hand as you approach your car or home.
- Before getting into your car, check the back seat and floor for someone hiding.
- Keep your doors locked and your windows rolled up most of the way.
- If you have to stop at a red light leave enough room between you and the vehicle in front of you to pull out and around if needed
- If someone tries to break into your car, honk your horn repeatedly; drive away if possible.
- If you are being followed, don't drive home. Drive to the nearest fire station, hospital emergency entrance, or a 24 hour business
- If you must leave your key with a parking attendant or service mechanic, leave only the car key, never the keys to the house. These can be duplicated easily.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Out Alone...

- If possible walk with a friend. Carry a whistle or other noise maker.
- If you have a cell phone, carry it and have it on.
- Stay alert, be aware of what is going on around you. Walk with confidence.
- At night, try to stay on well-lighted streets. Avoid doorways, shrubbery, dark shadows near buildings, alleys etc.
- If you take a bus and there are few people on board, sit near the driver.
- In a taxi or a friend's car, ask the driver to wait until you are safely inside the house.
- Stay away from deserted Laundromats or apartment house laundry rooms at night; be cautious even in the daytime.
- The safest place for a man to carry his wallet is in an inside or front pocket.
- A woman should carry her purse next to her body, with the flap or clasp toward her.
- Don't leave your purse on a store counter, in the shopping cart or sitting on the floor in restrooms, theaters, etc.

In Trouble...

- If a robber demands your valuables, give them up! Your money or your jewelry is not worth risking injury or your life.
- Don't carry weapons such as guns or knives. They can easily be turned against you.
- Be selective of new acquaintances. Remember, not all rapist are strangers.
- If you are being attacked, remain calm...retain, or regain, your emotional stability. Your panic can cause your assailant to panic and possibly hurt you.
- Seeming to cooperate with your attacker may give you the time you need to devise a means of escape.
- If you attacker is armed and threatens to harm you, your child or someone else, you may think twice about physically resisting or attacking him. Remember, though, no one can tell you how to react. You should do what you feel is best for you.
- Afterwards, call the police right away and write down everything you can remember about your assailant.
- Do not change clothing, bathe or apply any medication. Although this would be your natural reaction, don't do it. The physical evidence will be important in the prosecution of the attacker.

Note: The above are general suggestions on personal safety, your own common sense is your best guide.

LARCENY FROM AUTO →

Thefts from vehicles have skyrocketed over recent years. Projections for the future indicate this crime will continue to increase. The popularity of expensive sound systems accompanied by the related music formats, such as compact disks, along with various automobile accessories are quickly and easily stolen. It's both frustrating and infuriating for victims and law enforcement. Why? Simply put, the odds of catching a criminal in the act of breaking into someone's car are extremely small based upon the size of Lincoln and the small number of Police Officers working the street.

So what are citizens left with? **Prevention.** To keep from becoming a victim involves knowing what makes a good target for a theft.

PROPERTY MOST OFTEN STOLEN FROM VEHICLES:

- PURSES
- GYM BAGS
- BRIEF CASES
- CHECKBOOKS
- LAPTOP COMPUTERS
- CAR STEREO
- SPEAKERS/SUB WOOFERS
- COMPACT DISKS
- RADAR DETECTORS
- HAND/POWER TOOLS
- CELL PHONES
- MONEY



Items recovered after 2 criminals were caught breaking into several cars.



Basically if the property is in sight and not bolted down, the criminal will steal it.

MOST LIKELY TARGETS AND METHODS OF ENTRY INTO VEHICLES

The question comes up as to how criminals decide on what vehicle to break into? Theft from vehicle is a crime of opportunity. Parking in a dark area and leaving items inside a vehicle would make a good target. Some criminals look for vehicles with nice wheel rims or brand name stereo stickers in the windows. In extreme cases criminals have even followed a vehicle with a loud stereo until it parked somewhere and waited until the driver left her/her car unattended. Most often criminals just prowl the neighborhood looking into parked cars. Once a vehicle is targeted, the criminal just smashes the closest window with whatever is a hand. Some do use a screw driver or knife or just try the door handle to see if the car is locked. The actual theft only takes a few short minutes from start to finish.

WHAT DO THIEVES DO WITH ALL THE PROPERTY THEY STEAL?

Many times the items are sold or traded between thieves. A small amount of property can be pawned for quick cash. Personal checking items create bigger problems

LARCENY FROM AUTO

for victims. If a checkbook, credit cards and I.D. are taken, the thieves will use those items right away at 24 hour businesses and many times will max out an account in short order. Remember, if you have your personal items stolen, immediately contact your bank or financial institution and cancel the effected checks and credit cards. Keep track of all unauthorized transactions as this will help investigators with the case.

PREVENTION

The commonsense approach.

Take everything of value out of your vehicle and lock the doors. Park in well traveled and lighted areas or in a garage. A theft from your vehicle can happen at any hour of the day or night. Report suspicious activity, while it is occurring, you could save yourself or neighbor from being victimized. Don't even think you are "bothering" the police by calling to report suspicious activity. It's the police officer's job to detect and apprehend criminals. The police prefer that you call them so they can investigate the suspicious activity.

WHAT KIND OF THINGS DO I CALL THE POLICE ABOUT?

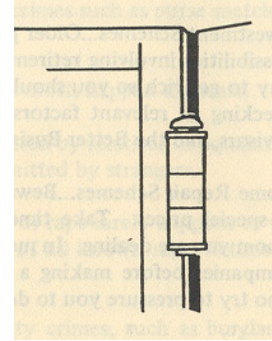
- **If you hear glass breaking. (A popping sound)**
- **You see someone looking into cars or ducking around them.**
- **Someone tampering with a car.**
- **A person carrying tools or property that doesn't fit the setting in your neighborhood.**
- **Individuals who are not familiar to the area or activity that "just doesn't look or feel right."**
- **If you see someone breaking into a vehicle, try to get a description of the suspects and their vehicle. Call 911 immediately and stay on the line.**

Remember, it is better to call in on suspicious activity and have it turn out to be nothing, than to have not called and a crime have been committed and a neighbor victimized.

HOME SECURITY

DOORS

1. Exterior doors should be of “solid-core” or steel construction.
2. They should have a dead bolt lock.
3. They should have a minimum of 180 degree peep-hole.
4. Out-swinging doors having external hinges should be “pinned”.

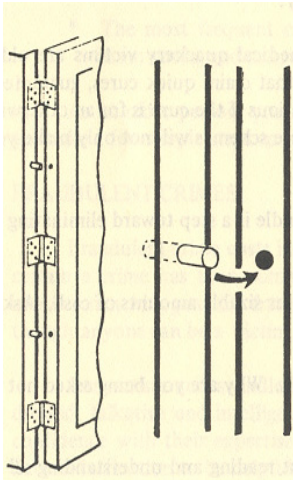


Door Pinning:

Exposed hinges on out-swinging doors can be defeated. A burglar can remove the hinge pins and then lift the door out of the frame. The solution is to pin the door to the frame by:

1. Inserting a screw or framing nail into the back edge of the door, protruding at least 1/2” midway between the hinges— as shown.
2. Drilling an opposing hole in the door frame to receive the screw or nail after the door is closed.

The hinge pin could be removed but the door would be held firmly by the pin. The other alternative would be to buy security hinges or have the pins tack-welded in place.

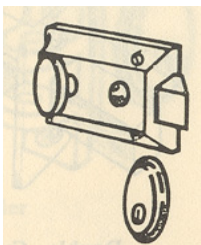
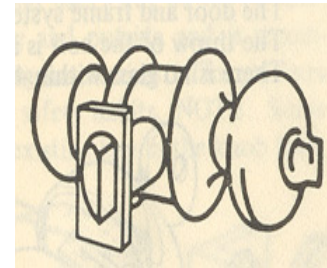


LOCKS

Spring Bolts

Spring bolt (key in the knob) locks are easily defeated by:

1. Wrenching the knob with the hands or using vice grips.
2. Using a credit card to slip the spring bolt.
3. Spreading the frame.
4. Kicking the door.

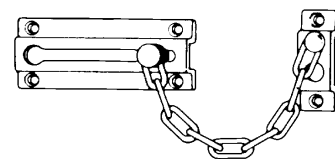


Cylinder Rim Spring Bolt

Cylinder rim spring bolt locks are easily defeated by using the same methods as described above.

Chain Latches

Chain latches are not locks and are easily defeated by kicking or prying the door. The screws will not hold, the chain will break, or the slide can be pulled out.

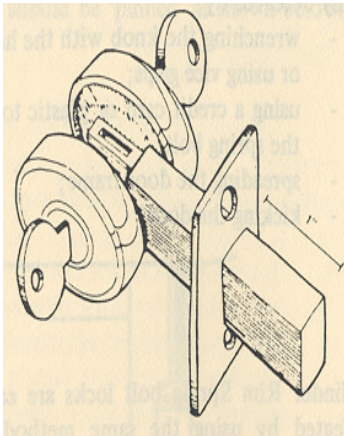
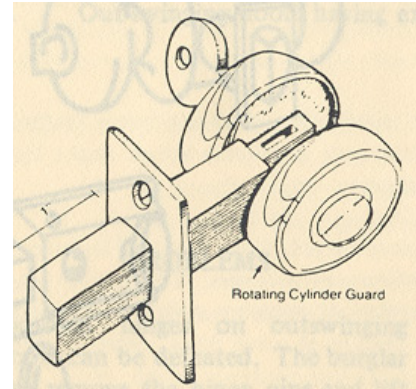


HOME SECURITY

Single Cylinder Deadbolts

Single cylinder deadbolt locks (key operated from the outside only) provide excellent security if:

1. The door and the frame system are secure.
2. The throw of the bolt is a minimum of 1" long.
3. There is no glass within 40" of the thumb turn.



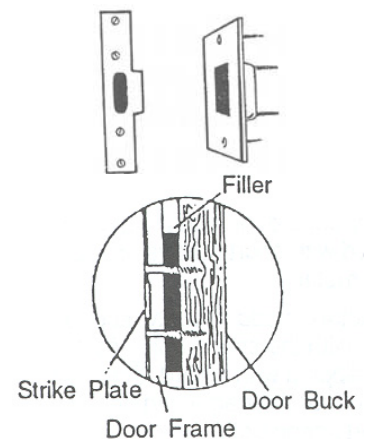
Double Cylinder Deadbolts

Double cylinder deadbolt locks (key operated from both sides) are recommended when glass is within 40" of the lock, but only after the following assurances:

1. The homeowner is willing to leave the key in the inside lock when anyone is at home.
2. The homeowner recognizes, and is willing to practice, good fire safety habits in the home.
3. The homeowner should also place an extra key on a nail at the baseboard at least 40" from the window.

Strike Plates

Screws are usually not long enough to hold if the door is kicked. Replace the weak strike plate on wooden frames with a high security strike box. Replace the screws with some that are at least 3" long. The longer screw will go through and into the door frame adding extra strength.



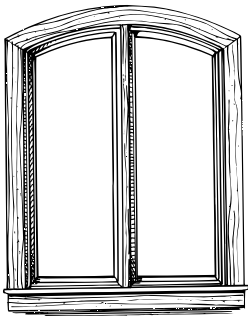
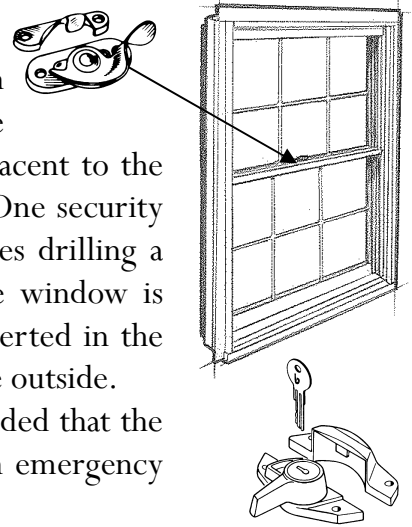
Garage Doors

Failure to close and lock garage doors presents the most serious security problem in the home. Walk-in doors should have the same security as any other door leading into the house. Overhead track-operated doors are best secured with electronic door openers. They should be the type that can be disconnected from inside the garage in the event that the home will be unoccupied for long periods of time. A padlock through the track or through an inside or outside hasp will provide additional security. If an automatic opener is used be sure to keep the remote out of sight or hidden inside your car.

HOME SECURITY

Double Hung Windows

Double hung windows can be easily forced open with a screwdriver or other prying tool. Screws can be forced out by prying against the hardware and glass adjacent to the crescent lock can be broken allowing it to be opened. One security solution would be to “pin” the window. Pinning involves drilling a hole through the window sash and into the frame the window is setting in. A thick nail, or other sturdy rod, is then inserted in the hole keeping the window from being pushed up from the outside. Key operated locks are also available but it is recommended that the key is kept near the window in case it is needed for an emergency exit.

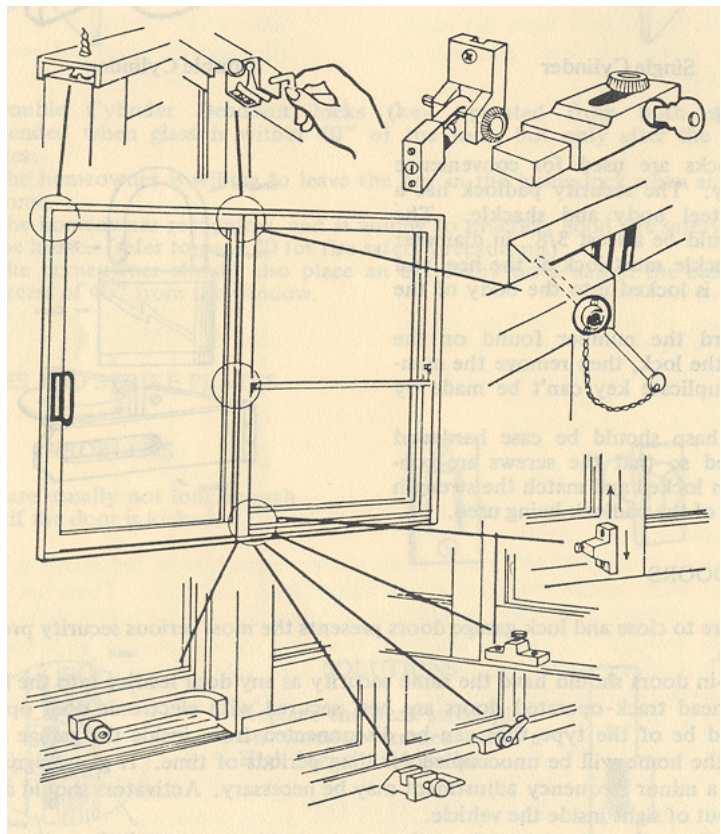


Casement Windows

Casement windows are the style that use a cranking mechanism to open and secure them. If a casement window is left partially open it can be easily forced. If the cranking mechanism is worn or the locking bar is not closed the window can also be forced. To avoid these problems replace any worn mechanism and install locks on the window.

Sliding Doors

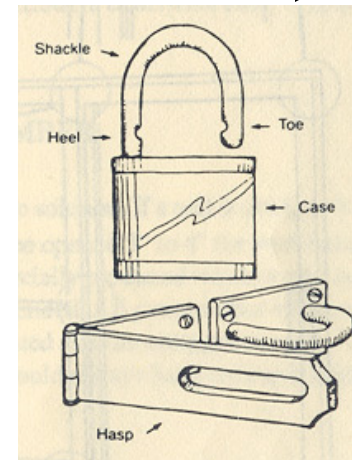
Sliding doors present a number of security problems. The entire door could be lifted from the frame. Weak frames can be peeled and opened. Inadequate locks can be slipped and the door forced open. To improve the security of your sliding door there are several different kinds of commercial locks available that you can add. There are adjustments screws in the frame that should be tightened to prevent the door from being lifted out of the frame. Another simple solution is to cut a broom handle or PVC pipe the same length as the door, placing it in the channel behind the door to prevent it from being slid open.



HOME SECURITY

Padlocks & Hasps

Padlocks are used for convenience and security. The security padlock has a hardened steel body and shackle. The shackle should be at least 3/8" in diameter and should lock at the heel and toe when inserted into the case of the lock. The hasp should be hardened steel and should be installed so that the screws are concealed. Record the number found on the bottom of the lock then remove the number so a duplicate key cannot be made by a criminal. Locks with shrouded hasps are also available.



Lighting

There should be illumination above entrances. Check lights periodically to ensure they are functioning properly. A 40 watt bulb provides sufficient light at a minimal cost. Having inside lights on a timer that turn on while occupants are gone will provide the impression that someone is home. Playing a radio on the same timer will add to the effect that someone may be home.

Control of keys

Never hide a key outside the home. Many burglars are aware of the usual hiding places. When moving into a new home have all of the locks changed or re-keyed. If keys are lost or stolen it may be necessary to re-key the locks.

Additional Suggestions

- Keep shrubbery trimmed below window level to eliminate hiding places.
- Keep the yard clear of papers or other periodicals that may indicate your absence
- Keep police and other emergency phone numbers near your phone for easy access.
- Keep an eye on your neighbor's home and report any suspicious activity.
- Incorporate fire protection into your home security:
 1. Conduct exit escape drills.
 2. Maintain smoke detectors.
 3. Have escape routes marked on a floor plan.
 4. Use family discussion to implement the plan.
 5. Practice the plan.
 6. Bedroom doors should be kept closed.
- House numbers should be highly visible from the street. The numbers should have a contrasting background and should be near a light.

CRIME PREVENTION GROUP PROGRAMS

Presentations on crime prevention topics are available through the Lincoln Police Department Crime Prevention Group. The presentations often include handouts and they can be structured for specific groups. The presentations are at no cost. Requests for a presentation should be made through the mail or by phone to the LPD Crime Prevention Group at 441-7261. Please allow at least two weeks advance notice for setting a date and time.

Available presentations include:

- **Business Security**
- **Business Watch**
- **Employee Theft**
- **Fraud & Forgery**
- **Home Security**
- **Neighborhood Watch**
- **Office Security**
- **Personal Awareness**
- **Robbery**
- **Security Surveys**
- **Senior Safety**
- **Shoplifting**
- **Telemarketing Scams/ID Theft**

Property Identification

Most of your valuables, electronics, appliances, tools, bikes, etc., can be engraved in an inconspicuous place. You can use your driver license number, your name, initials, or any other distinctive mark you can identify, to engrave on your property. Keep a record of what items you have engraved including where to look for the engraving. Taking a photo of the property to place in your file with the record would be even more useful. Engraving tools are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased at several hardware and department stores. Electric engravers are easy to use or you can use a simple pen-like scribe that has a carbide tip.

Other property, such as antiques or collectibles that would be harmed by engraving, should be photographed from at least two different angles. Include a description of the property to include the name and size of the item.

When the documentation of your property is complete keep the file in a secure place—such as a safe deposit box or a fireproof safe you keep in your home.

An inventory sheet is included to assist you making a record.

**LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION GROUP**

575 South 10th Street

Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

441-7204

441-7261

e-mail to: Lpdwatch@cjis.lincoln.ne.gov

www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police