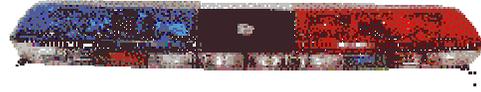


Senior Citizen Safety



Unfortunately, criminals sometimes target seniors. Reduce the chances of becoming a victim of:

- Burglary
- Frauds and Scams
- Mental and physical abuse
- Fire Hazards

Home Security & Burglary Prevention

Most burglaries occur during daylight hours and many intruders gain access through open or poorly secured doors and windows. To reduce your chance of becoming a victim of a burglary:

- Trim trees and shrubs to eliminate hiding places for thieves.
- Keep the exterior of your home well lit, especially where there are doors and windows. Install outside lights equipped with motion detectors to deter burglars and alert others of potential criminal activity.
- Make it difficult for an intruder to enter. Be certain your locks are functioning properly; all doors have deadbolts and use them. Make sure windows are locked and cannot be forced open, especially those not in use. Secure the basement and attic windows.
- Many communities have free or low cost repairs to low-income seniors. Check with local senior organizations for more information.
- Create and maintain safe and adequate escape routs in every room. Know how to get out fast.
- When away from home, use timers on inside lamps and radios to create the impression of an occupied home.
- When returning home, give the house a brief visual survey before entering. If anything looks suspicious, call 9-1-1 from another location.
- If you have an answering machine your message should not indicate that you live alone.
- Form a neighborhood watch program and look out for one another.
- Report suspicious activity to the police.
- Call 9-1-1 if needed.

Elder Abuse

Being hurt or controlled may mean you are being abused. There are many types of elder abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial

- Neglect

Watch for these indicators of abuse

- Injuries such as cuts, bruises, difficulty walking or sitting can be symptoms of physical or sexual abuse.
- Withdrawn or fearful behavior can be associated with psychological abuse.
- Family members or friends, suddenly involved in decisions pertaining to money matters may mean trouble.
- Poor provision of nutritional and hygiene needs can point to neglect.

Frauds & Scams

Every year billions of dollars are lost to fraudulent activities. Scams are conducted over the telephone, by mail, the Internet and door to door. Often, you will be pressured into donating or purchasing right now! Prizes, vacations, charities, club memberships, or investments can be the front used by con artists.

Don't fall for it!

- Legitimate organizations do not require immediate response and should provide you with information in the mail.
- Take your time and have others review information with you.
- Never give your credit card number over the phone unless you initiate the call and know whom you are calling.
- If someone will not let you get off the phone, hang up.
- Familiarize yourself with an organization by asking for references.
- Ask a lot of questions.
- Be cautious of anyone claiming, "You will never get another opportunity like this."
- If the offer seems too good to be true, it probably is!

Fire Safety

Protect yourself & your home from fires with these helpful tips:

- Test your smoke detectors once a month to make sure they work. Replace smoke detector batteries once a year.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on every floor in the house.
- Plan and practice a home fire drill. Make a map showing the exits from every room.
- Obtain an escape ladder for bedrooms located on the 2nd floor or higher. Make sure windows can be opened easily from the inside if needed for escape.
- Make sure burners are turned off after use.
- Keep and store flammable materials in a safe place.
- Eliminate fire hazards in your home, i.e. piles of paper, smoking in bed, etc.