

Burglary Prevention

Staying Safe in Saratoga

Everyone wants to keep their home and possessions safe, but no neighborhood is safe enough to be crime free. One of the simplest ways to keep burglars out is to keep exterior household doors locked at all times; and never hide a key outside.

Just like doors, all windows should be secured and locked when not in use or anytime no one is home. This includes upstairs windows. Blinds and curtains should be closed when no one is home or after dark to avoid advertising any expensive property and purchases.

Having a well-lit home can also help deter criminals. The Sheriff's Office suggests having exterior, motion-activated lighting at a home's front door, side yard, and back yard. Installing timers on interior lights and setting them to turn on at random times during the day and night can ward off burglars, the Sheriff's Office says.



Alarm systems are also important. Be sure to test them regularly and update all contact information—including an emergency contact—with the alarm company. An emergency contact can be a family member, friend, or trusted neighbor.

The emergency contact should have access to the home (i.e., gate or alarm code and keys to the home) and knowledge of the property so they know if anything is out of place or missing. Residents can also request patrol checks when going on vacation to make sure their homes are being watched while they are away.

The Sheriff's Office has similar tips to prevent vehicle burglary. Always lock a vehicle's doors and activate the alarm. Don't make it easy for criminals by leaving wallets, electronics, or other valuable items in the vehicle and in plain view. These are just a few tips. For more information, visit www.saratoga.ca.us/stayingsafe.



Neighborhood Watch

A neighborhood watch program can be an important part of a safe neighborhood. Residents can inform the Sheriff's Office of crimes in progress or suspicious activity, while neighborhood watch members can also use phone trees and online listservs to communicate crime trends and patterns in their area.

Visit the National Neighborhood Watch Institute website at www.nnwi.org, or call (888) 669-4872, to order a "How to Start and Maintain a Healthy Neighborhood Watch Program" handbook. It walks readers step-by-step through the creation of a neighborhood watch group.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

Be A Good Witness



Know your location and the location of the suspicious activity. Addresses and cross streets are very important. Always allow the dispatcher to ask questions before hanging up. Explain what's happening and why the activity is suspicious. Give as much detail as possible. Share information, such as the person's gender, approximate age, height and weight, race, hair color, eyes, and any other distinguishing features.

See A Vehicle?



If there is a vehicle involved, remember the acronym "CLAMMS." The C = color of car, L = license plate number, A = additional distinguishing features (stickers or body damage), M = make (Ford, BMW, Honda), M = model (2-door, 4-door, truck, SUV), S = state of license plate if not CA. Try to see how many occupants are in the vehicle and the last direction of travel.

Call It In



Always report suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Office. Residents know best who or what belongs in their neighborhoods. Deputies will always respond to investigate suspicious activity calls. Report the incidents immediately because time is of the essence. Call 911 or the Sheriff's Office non-emergency number at (408) 299-2311.