

# **Holiday Crime Prevention Tips from the Detroit Police Department**

## ***While Parking...***

- Try to leave early to avoid evening darkness.
- Park in a high visibility area and check for lighting in case you leave during hours of darkness.
- Do not park next to a vehicle with dark tinted windows.
- Prior to arriving at the shopping center, lock all your valuables in the trunk of your vehicle.
- Leave the store with others, not alone.
- Ask security to escort you to your vehicle if you feel uncomfortable.
- Walk briskly, confidently, and directly through the parking lot.
- Be cautious of people handing out fliers or asking questions in the parking area.
- Watch for people who may be following you. This can occur inside as well as outside. If you suspect someone following you, report it to security.

## ***During Shopping...***

- Always stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Shop with a friend, there is safety in numbers.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check, credit or debit card if possible.
- If possible, carry only your driver's license, personal checks, or necessary credit or debit cards.
- If you must carry a purse, do not wrap the straps around your arms or shoulders. Carry a clutch purse tightly under your arm or wear a fanny pack.
- Do not carry a wallet in a back pocket. It should be placed in a front pocket of your pants for safety.
- Be alert that crooks look for the "high dollar" shopping bags with your purchases. When possible, slip bags/purchases in a plain nondescript bag.
- Watch purchases while eating in mall food courts; bags can easily be switched or taken.
- Educate your children about what to do if they are lost as well as "Stranger Danger".
- Don't overburden yourself with too many packages.
- Have your car keys ready in hand before leaving the store.

## ***Using ATM Machines...***

- If you drive to the ATM and then exit your vehicle to use the ATM, lock the vehicle doors after you exit it. Keep your keys handy so you can re-enter your vehicle quickly after completing your transaction
- When approaching the ATM, be alert for anything suspicious, such as two or more people in a nearby vehicle or someone "hanging around" the area, especially if no one else is at the ATM.
- After dark, avoid using an ATM with shrubbery, etc. that prevents a clear view of the area.
- If the area is not well lit or the lights are out, don't approach the ATM.

## ***At Home...***

- Keep the outside of your home well lit with doors locked and window curtains closed.
- Don't display gifts beneath the Christmas tree that can be seen from windows or doors.
- After the holidays, don't advertise gifts received by the boxes left for the garbage collection.
- Destroy boxes and place in a sealed, non-clear garbage bag.

*Happy Holidays from the Central District*