

THE ROYAL LAKES CROWN



November/December, 2012

ROYAL LAKES ESTATES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Duane Chambers
President

Kristi DeNardo
Treasurer

Tara Masters
Secretary

MANAGEMENT COMPANY

RealManage
Sussan Martinez
2000 S. Dairy Ashford #120
Houston, TX 77077
1-866-473-2573
sussan.martinez
@realmanage.com

Minutes from the Board
Meetings and financial
information is always
available at
www.realmanage.com

*The purpose of this
newsletter is to inform
residents of business issues
in the community, issues
affecting residential and
community property, and
general reference
information.*

Please email articles or
suggestions to:
rlcrown@yahoo.com

ROYAL LAKES ESTATES HAS A NEW COMMUNITY WEBSITE!

REGISTER TODAY AT
www.royallakesestates.org
to
stay informed of all the
latest community news and
events.

a message from the President
Duane Chambers

Having time away from work to celebrate Thanksgiving, I took a moment to appreciate the people and things around me. There are many things to appreciate about our community. Not too many neighbourhoods have the infrastructure of a subdivision, while retaining the natural environment around the homes. We live in such a peaceful environment, where traffic is limited and the wildlife is plentiful. We also have a great number of families that take a great interest in our community.

Over the past six years, we have been blessed to have Gary Allman represent the homeowners association ("HOA"). Having been involved on the board of directors of the HOA for a year now, I have seen the amount of effort that Gary poured into our community. I would like to take this moment to thank Gary for all of the effort and time he has invested in our community. Great appreciation must also be extended to Thelma for supporting Gary's contributions.

During our recent annual meeting, Tara Masters was elected to fill the open board position for the HOA. Kristi DeNardo and I look forward to having Tara's fresh perspective on the board. After the election, the board realigned the directors' responsibilities. I will now have the huge responsibility of filling Gary's shoes as President of the HOA. Kristi will become the Treasurer, while Tara will take on the role of Secretary.

At the annual meeting, we introduced Russell Sackett's neighbourhood tree matching offer. Russell, who maintains the common areas landscaping, has graciously offered to match any donation to plant a tree in the neighbourhood common areas. Russell has secured the following deals through his wholesale tree vendor:

\$175 for a 45 gallon oak
\$275 for a 65 gallon oak

In addition to his matching donation, he will also install the trees.

Thank you to Susan Rice (HOA attorney) and Lowell and Christina Stanton for your donations to the tree matching program during the recent annual meeting. There were a number of others who expressed interest in donating money to plant trees in the neighbourhood common areas. If you need to mail your payment for your donation, please use the following address:

RealManage
Attn: Royal Lakes Homeowners Association
2000 S. Dairy Ashford #120
Houston, TX 77077

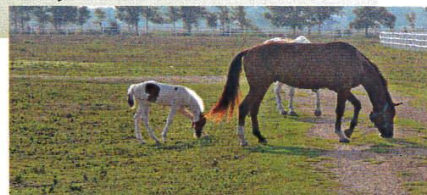
[continued on Page 5]

INSIDE YOUR NEWSLETTER

Message from the President	Page 1
RLE Housing Market Update.	Page 2
Your Health	Page 3
H2O for Texas	Page 4
2013 Board Meeting Calendar	Page 5
Message from the President [continued]	Page 5
It's Tree/Shrub Planting Season	Page 6
Reading Jr. High School News	Page 6
School News [continued]	Page 7



Royal Lakes Estates (RLE) Housing Market Trends November, 2012



The Value of a home is a mixture of a thousand memories, and current real estate market trends. I have loved living in our neighborhood: Coffee on my front porch, enjoying the sunrise, fog through the trees, and at the end of a stressful day-the peacefulness of an evening sunset - including the view of the lovely homes across the lake! Priceless. RLE is truly the "Gem of Fort Bend County" and a rare lifestyle choice offering acreage lots. I look forward to serving our community with the real estate portion of our HOA newsletter.

As we reach the end of the year, I would like to focus on the year to date regarding market trends. It has been a fabulous year; not only for RLE, but also for the Fort Bend market areas.

2012 RLE Market Trends - 1/1/2012 to 12/3/2012

5 Actives Price Range \$360,000 - \$545,000

2 Pending Sales Price Range: \$454,500 - \$488,000

17 Solds Price Range: \$270,000 - \$579,900

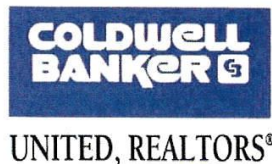
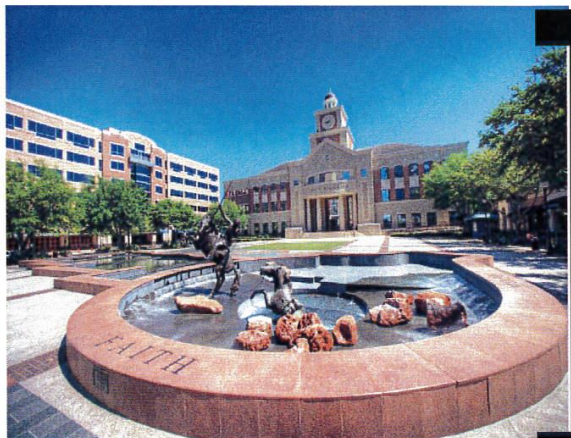
(2012 Average Sales Price / Average Square Foot) : (\$395,870 / 4,254) = \$93.06

More Specific Details upon request

Fort Bend Market Dynamics November Units MLS Areas 29,30,37,38

	Nov-11	Nov-12	%Change
Active	3,955	3,103	-21.5 %
Pending	445	632	+42%
Sold	477	489	+2.5%
MSI	7.1	3.4	-51.5%

*Report 12.3.2012; MSI = Month Supply of Inventory



Sandy McClusky

14033 Southwest Freeway Suite 702

Sugar Land, TX 77478

Office: (281) 242-6200 x3144

Mobile: (281) 543-9796

Fax: 281-242-5829

Email: smcclusky@cbunited.com



HOLIDAYS ARE AMONG US!



With the holidays fast approaching, here are some tips to keep us healthy and those unwanted pounds at bay:

Holiday Eating Tips

1. Don't skip meals. This backfires because you come to the next meal over hungry and eat more than intended.
2. Fill up on lower calorie, nutrient dense foods such as fruits, veggies, popcorn, lean cold cuts on whole grain bread.
3. Make just one trip to the party buffet.
4. Use a plate for even the smallest snack—you'll eat less.
5. Eat slowly and enjoy each mouthful. Hold your glass in the hand that you normally eat with to make finger foods less accessible.
6. Eat only when you are hungry and not because food is near.
7. Don't waste calories on foods you don't like or foods you can have anytime.
8. Contrast flavors, textures, and temperatures for more satisfaction in your eating.
9. Don't buy candy or goodies too far ahead of event. Once purchased, keep out of sight.
10. Avoid grazing while you cook. Little nibbles can really add up! When it's time to eat, sit down and savor it!
11. Beware of liquid calories -- eggnog, beer, soda, wine. They go down so easy and often do not add much nutrition to your intake.
12. Choose only the foods you really want and keep the portions small.
13. Don't hang out near the food -- socialize a distance away. This will help prevent unconscious nibbling.
14. Write a list of things to do other than to eat (such as take a walk, call a friend or do some cleaning) to have available when you feel bored, angry, frustrated, lonely, depressed or any way that leads to cravings.
15. Be realistic: trying to lose weight during the holidays may be a self-defeating goal. Instead strive to maintain your weight.
16. When you arrive at a party, avoid rushing to the food. Greet people you know -- conversation is calorie-free! Get a beverage and settle into the festivities before eating. Overall, you may eat less.
17. Ask for sparkling water (calorie free) with a lemon or lime twist rather than wine, champagne, or a mixed drink.
18. If you're bringing a dish to share, make it healthful and delicious. That way you know there will be one thing you can munch on without racking up calories too fast!
19. Forget the all-or-nothing mindset. Depriving yourself of special holiday foods or feeling guilty when you do enjoy them, isn't a healthful eating strategy. And deprivation and guilt certainly are not part of the holiday spirit!

Source: [HOLIDAY EATING TIPS](#)



YOUR HEALTH

The beginning of each year we all plan to live better, eat better, exercise, etc. For 2012, this page will be dedicated to your health. If you would like to see something special or submit a recipe, please let me know at rlecrown@yahoo.com.

CALORIE SAVING HOLIDAY RECIPES



For seriously satisfying spuds, try these vitamin-rich reds. Creamier than russets and lower in starch. All they need is a drizzle of olive oil before roasting; sprinkle with parsley and thyme and serve. Try [Accordion Potatoes recipe](#).

About 30 million households will serve this dish for the holidays. Too bad it's not as good for us as it tastes. We switched to low-fat milk and reduced-sodium broth, traded canned french-fried onions for oven-fried ones, trimming the total fat by 8 grams and dropping the sodium by 257 milligrams. Seconds, anyone? Try [Green Bean Casserole Makeover](#).



Replacing egg yolks and mascarpone with reduced-fat cream cheese, low-fat milk, and just a bit of whipped cream, this cocoa-topped 175-calorie dessert will leave you feeling light as a feather! Try this [Healthy Makeover Tiramisu](#).



H₂O₄TEXAS

**A diverse partnership of water providers and water users
committed to implementation of the Texas State Water Plan.**

NPR: Will Texas Lawmakers Fund the State Water Plan?

When it comes to the cost of the looming water crisis in Texas, the State Water Development Board is ready with some helpful numbers. They are generally big ones.

If the state does nothing to cope with its booming population and dwindling water supply, Texas businesses will lose \$116 billion over the next 50 years. The state as a whole will lose more than 1 million jobs. \$53 billion is the price tag of the plan that the Board thinks will avert those losses and assure water security into this century. But the state has never funded the plan.

Now, in the aftermath of the worst single-year drought in Texas history, water issues are getting more attention than they have in years. And lawmakers preparing for the upcoming legislative session are debating ways to fund the plan. But with many of those same lawmakers committed to cutting budgets and not raising taxes, their options are few and far between. That leaves them trying to figure out what, if anything, they may be able to do in 2013.

"You don't have to solve the whole problem today," Republican State Senator Glenn Hegar told StateImpact Texas at a recent conference on state water issues hosted by the Texas Tribune. He sits on the Senate's Natural Resources Committee. He believes it could be sufficient to fund a fraction of the total cost of the plan next year by dipping into the state's rainy day fund. Even a relatively modest initial investment, he says, could kick-start local water projects and pay large dividends down the road. "Invest [the funds] with an incentive. An incentive to not tell those local people what are the best projects for them, but to work in cooperation because they can also put dollars into the pot," Hegar said.

It wouldn't be the first time the state has written a one-time-only check for the water plan. Last session lawmakers appropriated about \$100 million to state water projects. It barely put a dent in the projected need and came a far cry from funding the plan in the long run. That has other lawmakers looking at other, longer-term funding strategies.

"Everything is on the table," Republican State Representative Allan Ritter told StateImpact Texas. Ritter chairs the Natural Resources Committee in the Texas House. Last session he floated the idea of initiating a fee for connecting homes and businesses to the water system. He said the so-called "tap fee" would provide that steady stream of funding for the water plan. "You know it'd be somewhere between the range of \$3.50 to \$5.00 range for a house every year," he said.

In 2011 that sounded too much like a new tax to get any traction with Texas lawmakers. Though Ritter thinks this year continued water shortages may force lawmakers to re-think their attitudes about funding. "We've gotta step up in that state of Texas and meet this demand because we're short," he said. But, according to others, the water plan wouldn't secure the state's water future even if it was fully funded. An opinion that makes the partial funding being debated by lawmakers sound a lot like fiddling around the edges of a larger problem.

The plan is "necessary but not sufficient to really address the critical water issues we had before last year's drought," Marilu Hastings, Environment Program Director of the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, told StateImpact Texas. To truly tackle Texas water challenges, she says lawmakers should take a more strategic approach towards what projects get funded. For example, the 2012 plan doesn't prioritize projects (some of the projects even appear to contradict each other) so even if money is found for the plan, it's not clear if it would be used to great effect. The plan could be better organized "so that your reservoir building, your conservation is more integrated," she told StateImpact Texas. *[continued on Page 5]*

ROYAL LAKES ESTATES



State law requires all HOA's to notify members of all Board meeting dates, times and locations. These meetings are open and can be attended by any member wishing to attend.

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS:

January 7	7:00 p.m. George Memorial Library
February 4	7:00 p.m. George Memorial Library

NPR: Will Texas Lawmakers Fund the State Water Plan? *[continued from page 4]*

Hastings and others also want the state to change how it governs surface and groundwater rights, and reconsider its estimates for future water supplies as the region gets drier. But with lawmakers struggling to fund the plan already on the books, it's unclear what other initiatives they will have the time or inclination to tackle when the legislative session begins in January. Get the original article [here](#).

Will the Texas Legislature address water this session?

Speaker Straus: "We have decisions, but we have no choice."

The 83rd Texas Legislature will convene in January of 2013, and this is the question on everyone's minds: will the Texas Legislature implement our [State Water Plan](#) this session?

In a recent [article](#) by the Houston Chronicle's [Matthew Tresaugue](#), [Speaker Straus](#) makes clear that water is among his priorities for the upcoming session. And when questioned about the likelihood of implementing the State Water Plan this session, our coalition's executive director, Heather Harward, said, "I truly believe, as someone who has been working on this issue since 1997, we are in the best position we have ever been. The unfortunate catalyst was the drought."

As we talk with Texans about our State Water Plan, we find that most Texans do not know where their water comes from. This less than four-minute video, [Liquid Assets](#), is a few years old, but it captures the complexity of our water infrastructure – the systems that clean and convey clean water into our homes and businesses. Would you please watch and share with your family, friends, neighbors and colleagues? Source: [H2O4TEXAS.ORG](#)

Message from the President *[continued from Page 1]*

I would like to take this opportunity to answer a couple of questions that were raised during the recent HOA meeting.

Do all homeowners have full access to the lakes throughout the community?

Answer: No. While the lakes themselves are common areas for the enjoyment of all homeowners, the areas between most homeowner lots and the lake are designated as an "exclusive common area" by the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for the neighbourhood. Exclusive common areas are only for the use of the owners of lake lots and access by the homeowners association for maintenance of the lakes and lake banks. However, there are a number of places where all homeowners can access the lakes. These locations include:

Pipeline easement between Lots 16 & 17, Block 2 of Section I adjacent to Crown Jewel Drive

Pipeline easement behind Lots 14-20, Block I of Section I (accessed from Royal Lakes Boulevard or Royal Crest Lane)

Common use easement between Lots 18 & 19, Block 2 and 7 & 8, Block 5 of Section I adjacent to Royal Lakes Boulevard

Common use easement adjacent to Kings Forest Lane (near the playground next to Gapps Slough)

Common use easements between Lots 12 & 13, Block 6 of Section II and Lots 1 & 16, Block 10 of Section II adjacent to Lady Laura Lane

Homeowners can find the subdivision plats, which depict the lake access points, through the Official Public Records search on the Fort Bend County Clerk's website. The subdivision plats can be identified by Instrument #s 2000061741 and 1176454.

Who has the responsibility to landscape and maintain areas around the utility boxes found on each homeowner's lot?

Answer: The Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions for the neighbourhood does not indicate any specific requirement to install and maintain shrubbery or other screening devices around boxes, transformers and other above-ground utility equipment on homeowners' lots. However, Article VII Section 15 & 16 does specify that the homeowners are responsible for screening similar mechanical equipment (ie. air conditioners, pool pumps, etc). While Article VII Section 8 does indicate that the homeowners association may install landscaping around such equipment, the homeowners association does not currently have any intentions of installing landscaping on homeowners lots where such equipment is not screened from street view. It is the opinion of the board, that the boxes, transformers and other above-ground utility equipment on homeowners lots is unsightly, and requests that homeowners install some form of landscape screening around the equipment. Please consider necessary access to the equipment by the utility companies when planting landscape screening.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season and look forward to serving you in the upcoming year.

It's Tree/Shrub Planting Season!



Hello neighbors! Did you know that now through late January is prime time to plant or transplant that new tree or shrub you've been eyeing at the local nursery? Planting now allows for establishment of new root growth before Spring rains and Summer heat stimulate new top growth. Planting a new tree or shrub begins with proper selection at the nursery or "box-store". When purchasing a tree or shrub in a container, be wary of plants that appear too large for their container. In most instances, a large plant in a small container means the roots are most likely "root bound" or circling the container and possibly girdling the trunk of the plant. In most cases, you can cut the circling roots to allow proper root growth out, into the surrounding soil. A good way to accomplish this is to use either a handsaw or reciprocating saw to cut through the circled roots.

Proper Planting of Trees/Shrub:

The first step in planting a tree or shrub is to decide on a location and call "811" on your phone to have the utilities marked for your area. This will ensure you know where the electric, cable and telephone lines run and avoid them when digging. Your water and irrigation lines will not be marked, so be careful when digging if you're not sure where they are. Now, find the "trunk flare" on the plant; this is the area at the base of the trunk that flares out. You want the trunk flare to be above the grade of the soil, especially in our compacted clay soils. Your next step is to dig a hole to plant. You want the hole to be 2-3 times wider than the root ball you'll be planting. The hole needs to be deep enough so that the trunk flare is sitting approximately 2 inches above grade in our area. After you have the root ball in the hole, you can back fill the remaining area with top soil or use a mix of topsoil and the native soil you previously dug. Do not put any soil on top of the root ball, as this will inhibit oxygen and moisture absorption. Be sure to pack the hole around the root ball to ensure there are no air pockets that can dry out the roots of the planted species. You can accomplish this by using water to aid in packing in the soil by making it softer. If you're planting a tall tree with a small root ball, you might need to install stakes to keep the tree upright. If stakes are needed, be sure to remove them toward the middle of the summer so the tree doesn't girdle the wire or rope. It is a good idea to add a 2-inch layer of mulch around the tree; however, do not put too much mulch near the trunk flare. Adding more than 2 inches of mulch to the tree will encourage root growth in the layered mulch and not below the trunk flare, where it's needed. This is a big problem, especially with "lawn crews" that do not know any better. Now, water the tree once a week, unless rainfall is adequate enough to negate manual watering. Do not fertilize the newly planted tree/shrub until late February or early March.

NO MULCH VOLCANOES! Driving around the neighborhood and many others, I've noticed an increasing amount of trees that have huge layers of mulch/soil being piled higher and higher with each passing season. Most Lawn Crews know how to mow a lawn, but lack any idea how to properly care for a tree. When mulch and soil are continually piled onto and around the trunk of the tree, it causes all the moisture to remain in that top portion of mulch. This causes new root growth in the piled mulch and doesn't allow the tree to receive water where it's needed, below the surface of the soil. Mulch needs to be below the trunk flare of the tree. After a tree is established, a mulch ring is not needed, unless you wish to have one for aesthetic purposes. If for aesthetic purposes, keep the mulch no deeper than 2 inches and away from the trunk flare. Mother nature knows how to grow trees; when's the last time you saw a mature Live Oak in the forest with a mulch ring, much less one that's been piled a 1½ feet tall!

Russell Sackett, owner
Greatwood Tree Service
Sackett Commercial Services, LLC



Antoinette Reading Junior High

Dates to Know

- Every Mon.: 4-6 p.m. - Library Late Night
- Every Tues.: 7:30 a.m. - Science Club, room 1611
- Every Wed.: 7:30 a.m. - SWAT, choir room
- Every Tues. & Fri.: 7:40 a.m. - Chess Club, LGI room

- 21: GT Nomination Forms Due
- 24 - 1/7: Winter Break

JANUARY

- 8 : Students Return to School
- 26: UIL Hosted at ARJH

DECEMBER

- 1: Christmas in Rosenberg Choir Tour
- 4 : Progress Reports Go Home
- 7 : School Dance - Winter Wonderland
- 13: Winter Choir Concert
- 13: NJHS Meeting

- 17: ARJH Winter Band Concert
- 18: ARJH Beginner Band Concert
- 18-21: Finals
- 19-21: Early Release Each Day at 11:30 a.m.
- 20: Teacher Holiday Luncheon

SCHOOL NEWS!!

Antoinette Reading Junior High

- Longhorn Gear/Spirit Wear Now Available Online

Get your Longhorn Hoodies before they're gone, along with all the other great ARJH gear. Go to the PTO website at readingpto.org to place your order

- Check Your Child's Grades Online

Parents, did you know that you can have access to your child's grades at any time of the day? By signing up to Classroom Connection Center (CCC), you will be able to view all grades and attendance. Go to <http://legacy.lcisd.org/NET20/ClassroomConnect/default.asp> and register, or go to the ARJH home page at readingjh.lcisd.org and select the 'Online Grades' icon. Required student information to register: district issued ID, last 4 digits of child's social security number (PEIMS ID) and child's date of birth. Keep on top of your child's grades and register today!

- ARJH Longhorn Legend School Newspaper

The first issue of the 2012-13 ARJH student produced *Longhorn Legend* is online. To view it, go to readingjh.lcisd.org and click on the 'Longhorn Legend' icon.

- ARJH Yearbooks on Sale Now

Yearbooks are on sale now until Jan. 11, for \$39. Orders can be placed by phone at [1.800.853.1337](tel:1.800.853.1337) or online at www.smart-pay.com. Please contact Mrs. Evans at cevans@lcisd.org or Ms. Hydo at thydo@lcisd.org with questions.

- ARJH Girls Basketball Schedule

For complete schedule with times go to the ARJH Athletics page and click on Girls Basketball

DECEMBER

- 6 - ARJH vs. Lamar - Away
- 13 - ARJH vs. Bay City - Home
- 17 - ARJH vs. George - Away

JANUARY

- 10 - ARJH vs. El Campo - Home
- 17 - ARJH vs. Bay City - Away
- 24 - ARJH vs. Lamar - Home
- 28 - ARJH vs. Briscoe - Away

LCISD Gifted and Talented (GT) Testing

Anyone can nominate a student for testing to qualify for LCISD's gifted and talented program. Nomination forms for the 2013-2014 school year can be picked up from the counselor's office and are due to the counselor's office by December 21, 2012. Parents will be notified in May of identification results. If students are already in the secondary GT program, they do not need to be nominated and re-tested for the following school year. Contact GT Facilitators Shirley Schmidt at sschmidt@lcisd.org or Susan Dynes at sdynes@lcisd.org with questions.

Teen Hotline

ARJH has been given access to the Crisis Hotline (sponsored by Crisis Intervention of Houston, Inc.). Any student who would like to have access to a 24/7 peer-to-peer counseling session or referral service can call 713-529-TEEN (8336). Students can also use the TEXT service by texting the word "TEEN" to "78247." This service enables teens to discuss their problems non-judgmentally, confidentially and anonymously with other teens or adults trained to address teen problems.

ARJH is on Facebook

Like us at: Antoinette Reading Junior High

Join PTO Today!

Become a member and help support ARJH.

Membership levels:

- Longhorn Supporter: \$5 - For ARJH teachers and staff only. (receive weekly eblasts)
- Longhorn: \$10 (receive weekly eblasts)
- Longhorn Pride: \$25 (receive weekly eblasts and decal or cinch bag)
- Longhorn Family: \$50 (receive weekly eblasts, decal, cinch bag and your name displayed at ARJH for the year as a PTO supporter)
- Longhorn Business: \$100 (receive weekly eblasts, business name and logo listed on PTO website)

How to become a member:

- Sign-up/pay on the PTO website at readingpto.org

For more info or questions, contact Membership Chair Ursula Wright at membership@readingpto.org.

ARJH is on Facebook - Like us at: Antoinette Reading Junior High

For more ARJH dates and information, please visit the ARJH website calendar at www.readingjh.lcisd.org. You can also check for updates on the Reading PTO website at www.readingpto.org.

DID YOU LOSE YOUR KEYS?

FOUND: Keychain with a lot of keys was found at the mailboxes at the front of the subdivision. If the keychain is yours, please contact Russell Sackett via e-mail at russellsackett@yahoo.com. The keychain was found a good while ago and a flyer was posted on the message board, but no response.



KEEP OUR MESSAGE BOARDS CLEAN!!!

PLEASE do not tape flyers to the front of the Message Boards! If you would like to post on the Message Board, send a copy of your flyer with a request to rlcrown@yahoo.com and if approved, we can arrange to have it posted. Anything "taped" on the outside will be removed immediately.

Thank you, Royal Lakes Board of Directors



THE HOLIDAYS ARE AMONG US!!

This Holiday Season, protect yourself, your family and your property against criminals wishing to do you harm. Criminals have a "desire" to commit crimes against those who are not aware of what is going on around them. The holidays are an opportune time for a criminal to commit these offenses. Know your surroundings and don't become a "target." It's up to YOU to make sure that a criminal does not have the "opportunity" to take advantage of you and your family.

USE COMMON SENSE -- STAY CALM

WHILE SHOPPING

- 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, carry only your drivers 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. You could risk injury from a would-be purse snatcher. Carry a clutch purse tightly under your arm or wear a fanny pack.
- Do not carry wallets in a back pocket. It should be placed in a front pocket for safety.
- Be alert, criminals look for the "high dollar store" shopping bags with your purchases. When possible, slip bags/purchases in a plain nondescript bag.
- Watch purchases while eating in mall food courts; bags as well as purses can easily be switched or taken.
- Educate your children about what to do if they are lost as well as what to do if a "stranger" should try and take them.
- Don't overburden yourself with too many packages. This jeopardizes your safety while walking to your vehicle. Either make multiple trips to your vehicle or have your packages sent to package pick-up where you may retrieve them in a well-lit and heavily populated area.
- Have your car keys ready in hand before leaving the store. They also make a great weapon, should you need to defend yourself.

- If you do return to your vehicle to unload packages and continue shopping, place your purchases in the trunk. Be observant of anyone watching, and if possible, move the vehicle to another parking space to deter a burglary of your vehicle.
- Try not to shop until the store closes. Remember, fewer people are present at this time.

IN PARKING LOTS

- Shop early and leave early to avoid evening darkness.
- Park in a high visibility area and check for lighting in case you leave during the hours of darkness.
- DO NOT park next to a vehicle with dark tinted windows. Waiting assailants can be obscured from view upon your return.
- Before shopping, lock all your valuables in the trunk prior to parking in the parking lot.
- Leave the store with a group of people, not alone.
- Ask the Security Officer to escort you to your vehicle if you are 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 the store. If you suspect that you are being followed, report it to the store or mall Security. Report it immediately.

For more information, visit [Holiday Safety – Houston Police Department](#)