

An apartment complex, townhouse, or condominium, along with other multi-story, multi-family dwellings, pose unique security problems. Because of the temporary nature of many residents of rent/lease property, residents need to make an extra effort to get to know their neighbors. All the good crime prevention tips taught to participants of Neighborhood Watch also apply to those living in multi-family dwelling communities.

Often apartments have problems with auto burglaries. There are several measures that you can take to help to prevent this from happening in your community:

1. ALWAYS LOCK YOUR VEHICLE.
2. Remove items such as radar detectors, briefcases, wallets, firearms, cellular phones, garage door openers, and other items of value.
3. Park in a well-lighted, high visibility area – preferably near your residence.

TO PREVENT AUTO THEFT

1. Use the above listed suggestions.
2. Always remove your key from the vehicle and never hide a key. The thief knows all the places to look, too!
3. Consider an anti-theft device such as steering wheel locks, ignition kills switches, alarms, or tracking devices.
4. Boat and trailer owners should follow the same precautions. Locking hitches are a must!



Eliminate any part of the equation and the crime will not occur. For example, remove the opportunity and even the criminal with the desire and ability will find it hard to commit that crime.

GOOD SECURITY HABITS

1. Re-key locks when moving into a previously rented residence or after keys have been lost or stolen.
2. Place DEADBOLT LOCKS on all exterior doors.
3. Install locks on all windows.
4. Trim shrubbery away from entryways and windows.
5. Light all entryways ALL NIGHT LONG.
6. Make apartment/building numbers visible from the street both day and night.
7. Use Operation Identification on valuables.
8. Report suspicious activities to the non-emergency line at 407-836-HELP (4357).
9. Report EMERGENCIES to 9-1-1.
10. Know how to contact your neighbors.
11. DO NOT reveal personal information, or information about your neighbors, to unknown callers.
12. DO NOT tell strangers that your neighbor(s) is/are not home.
13. Make sure your home looks occupied. (Leave lights and radio on timer.)
14. Always secure your doors and windows, even when leaving for a short time.

TAKE THESE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS WHEN AWAY OR ON VACATION

1. Leave a key with a trusted neighbor when away for an extended time.
2. Have mail and newspapers stopped or picked up every day.
3. Have someone leave a car in your assigned parking space.
4. Have a friend or relative stay in your apartment or check it on a regular basis.
5. DO NOT openly advertise your trip. Tell acquaintances all about it after you return.

FINALLY, IF A CRIME DOES OCCUR

Call law enforcement immediately. A five-minute delay means that the chance of catching the criminal drops by 60 to 70 percent.

Tell the deputy as much as you can. In many cases, it is what the victims and witnesses tell about the criminal that results in the arrest.

It pays to prosecute. 75 percent of the criminals processed are found GUILTY!

Being a witness in court is not as much trouble as you think. There are programs to help victims and witnesses with transportation, day care, and scheduling of their cases.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

Operation Identification involves the engraving of your driver's license number on valuables. This helps in two ways: (1) It lets the criminal know you are not an easy target and (2) it helps law enforcement identify stolen/recovered items and return them to their proper owner.

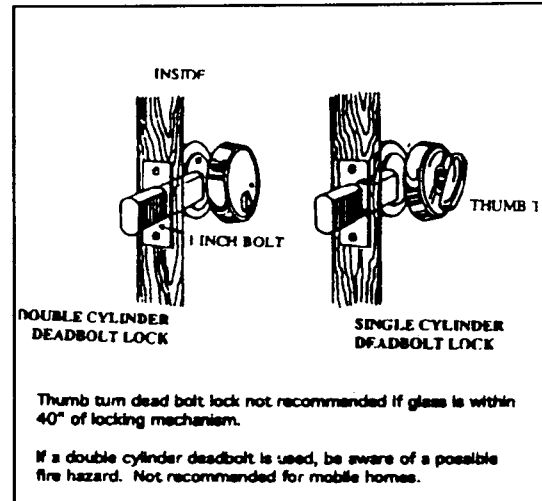
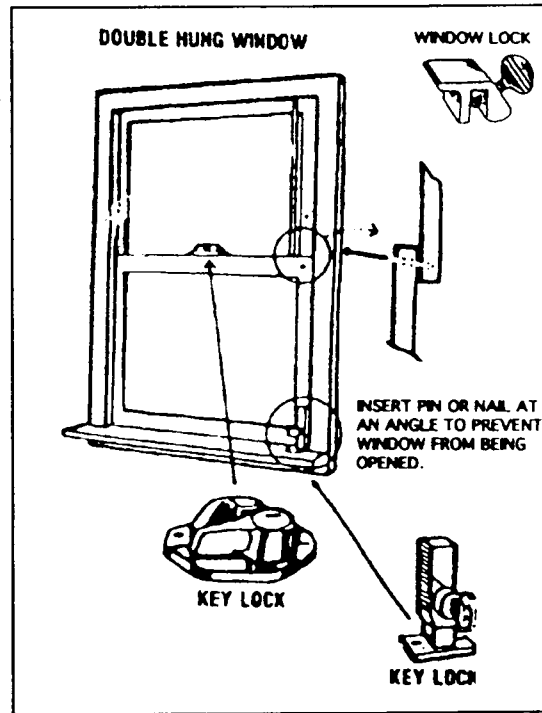
Along with marking your valuables, unmarkable ones should be photographed and all serial numbers should be recorded. A complete list of your valuables, with serial numbers and photos, should be kept with your insurance policy in a safe place.



For more information on how YOU can help prevent a crime, or to start a Neighborhood Watch Program in your area, call:



ORANGE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Crime Prevention Unit
408-254-7380



ORANGE COUNTY
SHERIFF

Sheriff Jerry L. Demings



APARTMENT
COMPLEX
SECURITY