



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



Auto Theft and Burglary Awareness

Auto theft is a problem for all Americans, but the citizens of New Mexico face a particular issue that affects our auto theft rate. Due to the fact that we are adjacent to an International Border, we are always ranked high on the list for theft rates. Typically, vehicles are stolen for one of four reasons. They are used to joy ride, sell for parts, commit a crime or driven across the border for resale. Auto burglary continues to be an issue as well. Many times auto burglary prevention can be as simple as removing targets from view and reducing opportunities by rolling up windows and locking doors. Observe the following tips to reduce the chance of auto theft and burglary.

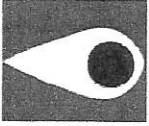
- Always roll up windows, lock the doors and take the keys even if you will be away for a short time. Remove ALL items from your vehicle whenever possible, but at the very least remove from view – even items that might have the perception of value. Don't give a car thief a reason to break-in
- If vehicles are parked outside, always keep windows up and doors locked at any, especially over-night. Some criminals walk up and down streets checking for open opportunities
- Some auto burglars break-in to steal your identity – consider removing your registration and insurance paperwork from the glove box. Put them in your pocket with your driver's license. The law only requires the paperwork be in the vehicle when it's being operated.
- **Never leave an unoccupied vehicle running, including in front of your residence. Warming up your vehicle in the morning during cold weather months is an easy target for auto thieves. Also, don't leave it running with the doors locked; criminals will just break the window.**
- Park your vehicle in a garage whenever possible or in an area with adequate lighting and good natural surveillance. You want your vehicle to be easily seen by you and your neighbors
- Consider organizing a Neighborhood Watch on your block. Neighbors watching neighbors – looking out for each others property will always be your best defense. If you're interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch, contact the APD Crime Prevention Unit at 924-3600
- Theft Prevention Device: After years of false alarms, people have stopped paying attention to vehicle alarms. Any serious anti-theft device must do more than just make noise. If you want an audio alarm, use it in conjunction with other forms of prevention.
 - A kill switch is a simple toggle device that shuts off the engine's ignition system.
 - Steering wheel locks are visible from outside the car and prevent the steering wheel from being turned more than a few degrees.
 - Collars are devices that prevent the steering column from being stripped.
 - Brake locks prevent the brake from being engaged and therefore the transmission cannot be removed from the park position.
 - Wheel locks prevent the vehicle from being moved in any direction.
 - VIN Etching your windows can be a deterrent if taken to a shop-chop – they can't simply remove an entire door for re-sale, but must replace the window first. APD conducts VIN Etching Events free of charge. Check with 311 for the date and location

CARJCKING: Avoid being a victim of this type of crime by observing the following tips.

- Drive with windows up and doors locked and be aware of your surroundings, especially when stopped at traffic signal, parking lot, ATM, gas station, etc. Take note of people approaching your vehicle for any reason
- When stopped at a traffic signal, leave space between you and the vehicle in front of you and be prepared to take evasive action
- If someone is loitering near your vehicle in a parking lot, keep walking and seek help

The goal in preventing auto theft is to establish multiple layers of protection for your vehicle. Thieves are looking for the path of least resistance. Although no method is foolproof, consider where you park, theft prevention devices and etching. However, spending money on anti-theft devices does not help if drivers don't follow the basic precaution of locking their cars, taking the key and activating those multiple layers of protection.

Call 242-COPS (2677) for suspicious behavior/activity or 911 for crimes in progress. Call the APD Crime Prevention Unit or your local Police Substation for additional Crime Prevention information.



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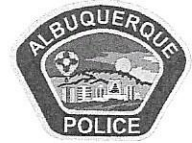
Residential Burglary Prevention

Residential burglary rates are generally dictated by the active involvement of individual citizens and cooperative education efforts by neighborhood associations and other community groups. Homeowners who are willing to take certain steps to prevent this type of crime, along with the assistance of local law enforcement, can reduce and sometimes prevent break-ins and burglaries. Consider the following prevention tips as well as ways to retrieve any lost or stolen property.

- Establish trusted relationships with neighbors on your block. Agree to watch out for each other and report any suspicious activity in and around your home. Remember, residential burglaries statistically occur during the day, so if possible, identify trusted neighbors who might be home during this time.
- Evaluate your existing lighting and pay particular attention to access points such as entry/exit doors and windows. Make sure that each area has adequate illumination so that your neighbors can see any suspicious activity occurring on your property. Consider adding motion sensors to lights in remote areas around the home.
- Each door should be metal or solid core with a deadbolt lock and a minimum 1" throw. Short strike plate screws should be replaced with 3-4" screws that secure the plate into the doorframe. Doors should also be equipped with 180-degree eye viewers. Consider a security screen door.
- Trim all bushes and shrubs below the window level and up from the ground. Trim mature trees up to a level 6-8 feet above ground. Eliminate hiding places or areas that allow someone the opportunity to enter through a window without being noticed.
- All primary window locks should be in place and fully operational. Install secondary thumbscrew locks on guide rails. Place them in a location that prohibits the window from being opened more than a few inches. Also, make sure screens are in place and secure. (Note: Windows and pet doors are common illegal entry points)
- Install screws in the upper rail of sliding glass doors. Place them just far enough into the rail to prohibit the door from being lifted and removed. Dowel rods and "charley bars" are secondary methods to secure the door, but make sure the primary locking device is operational.
- Non-forced entry burglaries are on the rise, especially during warm weather months. Eliminate this possible access point by closing and locking garage doors, windows and front/back doors.
- Organize a Neighborhood Watch for your block by calling the Albuquerque Police Departments Crime Prevention Unit at 924-3600
- Record Your Property: The Albuquerque Police Department encourages all residents to use a free online system that will help keep track of valuables and other personal items. ReportIt is a free, secure online service allowing citizens to record serial numbers, item descriptions, pictures, scan receipts and upload images for phones, electronics and other valuables. Should those items ever be stolen, having the information will go a long way in accurately and quickly identifying your property for insurance claims and recovery. You can access this valuable site at reportit.leadsonline.com



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DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLICITATION

Illegal or unauthorized door-to-door solicitation presents a possible unsafe situation in the residential setting. Individuals who represent themselves as a legitimate business are often times conducting fraudulent or potentially criminal activity. This type of enterprise is less prevalent today so individual citizens should consider any unexpected knock at the door to be potentially suspicious. The following are suggestions about how to create and maintain a safe and secure residential environment and how to handle the unwanted or unauthorized solicitor.

- The average citizen can define and describe normal behavior and activity in their immediate area or block. Citizens should apply this knowledge to persons walking the neighborhood. Strangers or those people that do not belong should be noticed and observed for suspicious activity. If a person's behavior is deemed to be abnormal or suspicious, the citizen should call the non-emergency number 242-COPS. If someone witnesses a crime in progress, dial 911.
- If the resident receives any knock at the door, they should **ALWAYS** observe the area through a window or eye-viewer prior to opening the door – even if they are expecting a visitor. If an unfamiliar person is observed outside the residence, the occupant should be very cautious about opening the door. If there is a security screen door with a deadbolt lock in place and the citizen feels comfortable with opening the door, they should not engage the individual; rather politely ask them to leave. In the absence of a security screen door, they should notify the visitor they are unwelcome and ask them to leave the premises via the locked door and should never allow entry for any reason. Once the person is asked to leave, the resident should observe them leaving and be prepared to report suspicious activity to the police.
- It is important to note that a knock at the door should not go unanswered in some manner – whether through the security screen door or the main door. Criminals posing as a legitimate solicitor are looking for an empty house to eventually commit residential burglary. If the criminal breaks into an expected empty residence and finds an occupant, the probability of a violent encounter is high.
- Home Invasions can be the result of a door-to-door solicitor. The criminal knocks on the door and through a variety of techniques, persuades the resident to open the door. Once the door is open other individuals appear from obscured locations and force their way into the residence. If someone is at the door claiming to require assistance or some type of help, especially late at night, **NEVER OPEN THE DOOR** – call 911.
- Citizens who have experienced an illegal solicitor or suspicious person should alert other neighbors in the immediate area.
- It is recommended that no one engage or enter into a discussion about the purchase of items or services from any one who initiate contact with them. If items or services are needed, citizens should pursue the purchase through established businesses. **All frauds and scams originate from contact initiated by someone else.**
- How to verify a solicitor's legitimacy – **All legitimate businesses in the City of Albuquerque must have a permit to operate, this includes the door-to-door solicitor per City Ordinance 13-3-1-1.** *The Ordinance requires the individual to have on their person a permit that can be produced on request, which includes photo identification. Any solicitor that claims not to have one or has left it in another location should be considered illegitimate. If you desire the right of privacy, posting a No Trespassing or No Soliciting sign on your premises must be observed by the solicitor. Solicitation is permitted only between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and sunset.*