



# City of Rockford

## ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Daniel G. O'Shea, Chief of Police

### Protecting Your Home and Car from Burglary

**FOR EMERGENCIES OR TO REPORT A CRIME IN PROGRESS DIAL 9-1-1**

#### TO REPORT OTHER CRIMES OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY:

Dial 815-966-2900 and give the appropriate information to the public safety dispatcher and the information will be given to the police units in the area. Remember good citizens are the eyes and ears of the police department. Your police are more effective when "you" make the decision to get involved and make the call.

#### Residential Burglary

Burglary is a crime of opportunity! The information presented here contains measures which can greatly reduce your risk of becoming a victim of residential burglary. No one can make your home 100% burglary proof. You can however make your home more difficult to enter and less appealing to burglars with some simple and common sense precautions.

#### Close and lock all of your doors!

The simplest and at no additional expense protection. An open door is an invitation to burglars and other criminals. Particularly during warm weather, homeowners tend to leave their garage doors, front doors, and windows open. Burglars often cruise neighborhoods at night, looking for open doors, particularly open garage doors. They steal golf clubs, tools and bikes, anything they can sell quickly and easily. Closed and locked garage doors help protect valuable property stored in your garage and prevent access to the interior of your residence.

#### Garages

Always keep your large/vehicle sized garage door(s) closed and locked while you are inside your home, particularly at night. Small entry doors in the garage should be secured with a dead-bolt lock, (single cylinder), and if there is a glass within forty inches of the lock the glass area should be protected by a decorative metal grill or polycarbonate material. Garage windows can be secured by the pin method or they can be covered with a decorative metal grill. Windows should also have curtains to curtail visibility into the garage. When away from your home for long periods of time the overhead door should be made immobile by inserting a bolt or lock into the track area. If you have an electric garage door opener it should be disconnected before you leave.

#### Door Systems

The exterior doors of your home are your first line of defense against intruders. Doors should be of solid wood or metal construction and should be equipped with a single cylinder dead-bolt lock with a one inch throw that contains a hardened core or a free turning steel pin. A single cylinder dead-bolt is recommended instead of a double cylinder for fire safety reasons. The door should also be equipped with a peephole viewer (wide angle style).

## **Locks**

A good strike plate is just as important as a good lock. It is recommended that the strike plate be installed with at least four 2 ½ inch screws that penetrate through the door frame into the studding material in back of the frame. Good locks and strikes may not hold if mounted on inferior doors and frames.

## **Strike Plate**

Doors with glass windows which are closer than 40 inches to the door lock should have the window area covered by a decorative grillwork or polycarbonate (unbreakable) material.

## **Sliding Glass Doors and Windows**

Sliding glass doors can be equipped with an auxiliary lock and/or a bar in the door track to prevent easy entry. Sliding glass doors can also be pinned in much the same method as double hung windows. Many sliding glass doors can simply be lifted out of the track and entry can be made in that manner. To prevent this, simply place screws or a wood strip in the upper track.

## **Windows**

Common double hung windows can be secured by drilling a hole and inserting pins. Additional holes may be drilled to secure the window in a ventilating position. The raised window opening should not be more than six inches. An alternative would be to install key type dead-bolt window locks. Secure all screens and storm windows from the inside by using auxiliary locks or hook and eye hardware.

## **Sash Windows**

Basement windows should be secured by a hinged bar so entry cannot be gained if the glass is broken out, yet available for exit in case of fire or natural disaster.

## **Lighting (Exterior)**

Adequate outdoor lighting is essential and is quite often overlooked for security applications. Lighting should be sufficient enough to illuminate at least all exits and the garage area. Consideration should be given to using light sensors with whichever light system you choose. These sensors will automatically turn the lights on at dusk and off at sunrise to conserve electricity. There are many types of lighting systems to choose from; Mercury Vapor, Incandescent, High Pressure Sodium, Low Pressure Sodium, and Metal Halide lights. All will give sufficient lighting but the type chosen should be based on individual need, cost of installation and cost of operation.

## **Alarms**

Many homeowners are utilizing burglar alarms to protect their property. If you desire an alarm system in your home you should thoroughly study your security needs and contact at least three local, reputable alarm companies for estimates. You should also check your local ordinances and codes for any alarm system requirements and/or restrictions. Some municipalities may require you to register your alarm system and or require an alarm system permit.

[Click here for information on City of Rockford Alarm User Permits. \(Link to Finance department\)](#)

## **Operation Identification**

Operation Identification is a program designed to discourage burglary, theft and recover stolen property. You can engrave items of value in your home garage or business with your driver's license number followed by the abbreviation for Illinois. Electric engraving pens will mark all hard surfaces.

### **When You're Not Home**

The home with a "lived in" or "at-home" look is a deterrent to burglars. Follow these simple rules, even when you're leaving the house "just a couple of minutes":

- Lock all outside doors and windows.
- At night, leave one or more lights on in locations not visible from windows.
- Use inexpensive plug-in timers that will turn the lights on and off.
- Leave a radio playing, preferably turned to a talk show with volume low.
- Do not leave notes indicating your absence.
- Shut and lock the garage door.
- Do not leave extra keys in hiding places, burglars will look for them.

### **Vacation Tips**

- Don't discuss your vacation plans until after you return.
- Make sure your home looks lived in, not empty; stop mail, newspapers and other deliveries.
- Ask a neighbor or friend to remove handbills or sales literature that might accumulate.
- Hide empty garbage cans.
- Leave shades and blinds in normal positions.
- Use automatic timers on lights and a radio.
- Arrange for lawn care or snow removal.
- Leave a key with a trusted friend or neighbor.

### **SECURITY TIPS**

- If you live alone, use only your first initial and last name on your mailbox and telephone listing.
- Always answer your door, but never open it to strangers.
- Use your door viewer peephole and talk to the person through the door.
- Require all service men and sales representatives to show proper identification. (Uniforms alone should not be considered as proper I.D.)
- If strangers telephone or come to your door, don't indicate that you are alone.
- Keep window shades down and curtains closed at night.
- You should have a telephone located in your bedroom for quick access.
- Report any suspicious sounds, activities, automobiles or people to the police.