

Keep your home secure during the holidays

One of the best parts of the holiday season is spending time with family and friends. For some that means packing up and heading out for an extended period of time. Before you leave, it's important to take precautions to keep your house safe while you are gone.

If you are planning to travel this holiday season, here are a few tips to remember.

- Lock up. Don't overlook the obvious. Double check that every door and window in your home is properly shut and locked.
- Keep your travel plans offline. Never post where you are going, when you are leaving or when you will be back. This is prime information for a thief.
- Try to keep your Christmas tree,



- with gifts underneath, away from windows or other places with a view. When you aren't home, it's easy to break through a window and grab all of your gifts.
- Keep boxes from big purchases hidden in the trash. Leaving empty boxes from expensive items out just advertises what burglars can find in your home. Put the boxes in an opaque trash bag, or at least

flatten them and tape them together with the inside of a box blocking out any description. You might consider taking the boxes to a recycling collection site.

- Keep valuables out of your sock drawers and other obvious places. In the unfortunate event someone does break into your home, you can still keep valuable items safe by steering clear of common hiding places like sock drawers, under the bed, or in cabinets. Get creative with a hiding spot.
- Notify a trusted neighbor. Ask the neighbor to keep an eye on your house and report any suspicious activity to the police and pick up your mail and newspapers while you are away.

Sober driving during the holidays

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) the three to four days around each holiday generally find more people on the road, many attending and returning



home from celebrations of one sort or another. There are more motor vehicle deaths during these times and the proportion of drivers and motorcycle riders who are legally "drunk" exceeds the national average. In the few days surrounding Christmas and New Year's Eve, an average of 304 people die in drunk-driving crashes.

Many people try to calculate their blood alcohol concentration (BAC's) after drinking. It's not so simple. It involves the number of drinks consumed, type of drink, size of the glass, body weight and gender, and elapsed time, etc. The safest level when driving is a BAC of zero.

If you plan to drink this holiday season, designate a sober driver and enter taxi company numbers into your cell phone in case you need a ride home.

Even if you don't drink this holiday season, other drivers will get behind the wheel after drinking. Be alert for impaired drivers especially at night and on weekends. Always wear your seat belt. It is your best defense in a crash.

Report drunk drivers by calling 9-1-1.

Myths and misconceptions about alcohol

- **A cup of coffee or cold shower will sober you up.** Only time will reduce the alcohol in your body as your liver takes time to metabolize it.
- **Alcohol is a stimulant.** Actually alcohol is a depressant and at high levels can paralyze the respiratory system and cause death. At low levels it can cause drowsiness, reduces inhibitions and affects your balance, coordination, and reaction time.
- **I know when I'm too drunk to drive.** Your perception of your own physical state and judgment are the first things alcohol impairs.
- **I can't be convicted for driving under .08 BAC.** Officers in every state can arrest or cite you for impaired driving at any BAC level. This can lead to a drunk driving conviction on your driving record.
- **If I don't have anything to drink in the last hour before I drive home, I'll be okay.** That depends on your BAC. Each hour your BAC will go down about .015. It may take longer than an hour to clear your system.



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Charitable giving tips for the holidays



Only about a third of donors do any research when making a donation.

It's the holidays and not only are you busy shopping for that special gift, you are inundated with charities asking for a



donation. People tend to be most generous during the holidays and if you want to receive a tax donation for your charitable gift it needs to be completed by December 31.

Any time of the year is a great time to give. However, it's important to make sure your hard earned dollars go to a reputable charity. There are thousands of charities to choose from.

Unfortunately, many people don't take the time or thought into where there donation will go. One survey found that only about a third of donors do any research before giving.

If you decide to make a donation this holiday season, or during any time of the year, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) offers these tips:

- Get the exact name of the organization. Search the name online with the word "complaint" or "scam."

- Check to see if the charity is trustworthy at www.give.org, charitynavigator.org, charitywatch.org, or guidestar.org.
- Never send cash donations.
- Never wire money to someone claiming to be a charity.
- Be wary of charities that spring up too suddenly in response to current events and natural disasters.
- Do not provide your credit card number or any personal information until you've thoroughly researched the charity.
- Don't ever make a donation if someone pressures you into it.

So if you plan to make a donation this holiday season, do so with your head and heart. Your donation will certainly warm you and others for a long time to come.

Signs of a charity scam

Charities use the phone, face-to-face contact, email, and mobile devices to solicit donations. Regardless of how they reach you, avoid any charity that:

- Refuses to provide detailed information about its identity, mission, costs, and how the donation will be spent.
- Won't provide proof that a contribution is tax deductible.
- Uses a name that closely resembles that of a better-known, reputable organization.

- Thanks you for a pledge you don't remember making.
- Asks for donations in cash or asks you to wire money.
- Guarantees sweepstakes winnings in exchange for a contribution. (By law, you never have to give a donation to be eligible to win a sweepstakes.)
- Offers to send a courier service to collect the donation immediately.



Check out a charity

BBB Wise Giving Alliance

(www.give.org) has a guide for donors, charity evaluations, and "tips" for wise giving.

Charity Navigator

(www.charitynavigator.org) is an independent American non-profit corporation that evaluates charities in the United States.

Charity Watch

(www.charitywatch.org) The American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP) also known as Charity Watch, is a non-profit organization created to provide information about a charity's financial efficiency, accountability, governance, and fundraising.

Guide Star (www.guidestar.org) lists 1.8 million non-profits in its database, all of which have met IRS criteria for exempt organization.

California Attorney General's Office

(www.ag.ca.gov/charities/index.htm) oversees charities in California.

IRS (www.irs.gov/app/eos) You can check an organization's tax status with the IRS.

If you think you've been the victim of a charity scam, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (www.ftc.gov).

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Trade Commission, thebalance.com, the Safe Wise Report, AAA

Police Department

1051 Junction Blvd.
Roseville CA 95678
(916) 774-5000
www.roseville.ca.us/police

Call 9-1-1
EMERGENCY
IN PROGRESS

Abandoned Vehicle Hotline

(916) 746-1022

Alarms/Alarm Permits

(916) 774-5093

Animal Control

(916) 774-5090

Community Events & Neighborhood Watch

(916) 774-5050

PDCommunityServices@roseville.ca.us

Graffiti Abatement

(916) 746-1021

Police News & Crime Alert Emails:

www.roseville.ca.us/enotify

RCONA

(Roseville Coalition Of Neighborhood Associations)
www.RCONA.org



The "9-1-1" is published for City of Roseville's residents by the Community Relations Division of the Roseville Police Department. Please send comments or suggestions to pdcommunityservices@roseville.ca.us, (916) 774-5050.