

## How to make your home burglar resistant

### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Which yard would you choose to hide in before you break into the house?



It's March and soon spring will be upon us. For many it's a time for yard clean-up and landscaping. While you are out doing your yard work this spring, keep in mind that what you plant and where you plant things in your yard can impact the safety of your home.

CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) focuses on the physical design of your home-fencing, lighting, plantings-to identify areas or elements that may have the potential to attract crime.

There are things each homeowner can do to discourage criminal activity. It is possible to reduce opportunities for crime by changing the physical environment.

### Natural surveillance

CPTED promotes and prioritizes increased visibility in and around a property to deter burglars and thieves who frequently target residences with low

visibility. Here are some things to keep in mind as you go about your springtime yard work.

**Landscaping** - Plants should follow the 3-8 rule of thumb. Hedges should be no higher than three feet and tree canopies starting no lower than eight feet. This is especially important around entryways and windows.

**Lighting** - Make sure outside lighting is adequate. Motion-sensing lights perform the double duty of providing light when needed and letting trespassers know that "they have been seen."

**Windows** - Windows that look out to streets are good natural surveillance. These should not be blocked. Retirees, stay at home parents, and people working from home can provide good surveillance for the neighborhood during the day.

### Natural access control

This refers to homes having distinct points of entry. Generally crime perpetrators will avoid areas that have high visibility. Therefore, residences should have front and back doors that are clearly visible and well lit. Consider adding dense or thorny landscaping as a natural barrier to reinforce fences and discourage unwanted entry. Natural access control can be complemented by mechanical forms of access control such as locks and alarms.

### Territoriality/defensible space

This means showing that your community "owns" your neighborhood by removing graffiti and keeping yards maintained. Personal touches such as creating flower gardens or boxes and putting out seasonal decorations sends the message that people in your neighborhood care and won't tolerate crime in their area.

## Keep your garage door closed



With warm weather and longer days comes yard work. Many residents keep their lawn equipment and other valuables inside their garage. It is not uncommon for residents to leave their garage door open while they are

outside working. This may be convenient, but it is an open invitation to a burglar. Even if you are out front mowing, a criminal can quickly slip into your garage and enter your home. This can happen in a matter of five seconds or less. Here are some additional tips to keep in mind:

- **Don't leave your opener in your car.** If a thief breaks into your car and steals the remote, he has an easy way into your home.
- **Secure the emergency release.** If you are away from home or on a trip use a zip-tie to secure the emergency release.
- **Make sure the garage door is closed.** When

leaving your home, don't just hit the remote and drive away. Stop and make sure the garage door closes and stays down.

- **Check the garage door before going to bed.** It is not uncommon for night shift officers to run across an open garage door.
- **Mark your property.** Engrave your driver's license number on all high value items in your garage. If stolen times are recovered, there's a way for you to identify your property.

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## Tax season and the IRS scam



It's March and that means tax season is upon us. The Better Business Bureau's scam tracker listed tax scams as their number one scam in 2016. If last year is any indication, tax scams again will be amongst the top scams for this year.

The IRS wants to warn taxpayers that scammers will again be out in full force trying to steal your money and personal information this tax season. Here are a few tips from the IRS website.

using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer.

- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

The IRS website lists the following scams targeting taxpayers:

### IRS impersonation telephone scams

Callers claim to be employees of the IRS, but are not. These con artists can sound convincing when they call. They use fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling. Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Or, victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn't answered, the scammers often leave an "urgent" callback request.

### Surge in email, phishing and malware schemes

The IRS has issued several alerts about the fraudulent use of the IRS name or logo by scammers trying to gain access to consumers' financial information in order to steal their identity and assets. Scammers use the regular mail, telephone, fax or email to set up their victims.

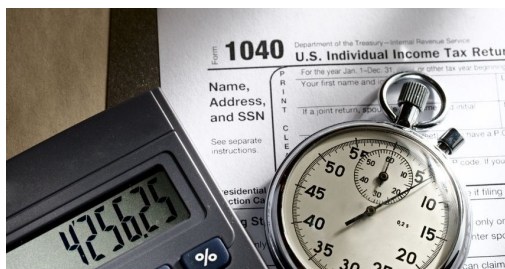
Scam emails are designed to trick taxpayers into thinking these are official communications from the IRS or others in the tax industry, including tax software

companies. These phishing schemes can ask taxpayers about a wide range of topics. Emails can seek information related to refunds, filing status, confirming personal information, ordering transcripts and verifying PIN information.

The IRS is aware of email phishing scams that appear to be from the IRS and include a link to a bogus web site intended to mirror the official IRS web site. These emails contain the direction "you are to update your IRS e-file immediately." The emails mention USA.gov and IRSgov (without a dot between "IRS" and "gov"), though notably, not IRS.gov (with a dot). These emails are not from the IRS.

### Tax refund scam artists posing as Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

According to the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP), taxpayers are receiving emails that appear to be from TAP about a tax refund. These emails are a phishing scam, where unsolicited emails which seem to come from legitimate organizations — but are really from scammers — try to trick unsuspecting victims into providing personal and financial information. Do not respond or click the links in them. If you receive an email that appears to be from TAP regarding your personal tax information, please forward it to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov) and note that it seems to be a scam email phishing for your information.



### Remember the IRS will never:

- Initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text message, or social media channels to request personal or financial information.
- Threaten taxpayers with lawsuits, imprisonment or other enforcement action.
- Call to demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Ask for a credit or debit card number over the phone.
- Call to demand immediate payment



## Protect yourself from identity thieves

The IRS is working with state revenue officials, tax software providers and tax preparers to combat identity theft. Here's a few things you can do.

### Keep your computer secure

- Use security software (firewall, virus/malware protection, and file encryption for sensitive data) and make sure it updates automatically.

- Treat your personal information like cash. Don't leave it lying around.
- Give personal information only over encrypted websites ("https" addresses.)
- Use strong passwords and protect them.

### Avoid phishing & malware

- Avoid phishing emails, texts or calls that appear to be from the IRS and companies you know. Go directly to their websites instead.
- Don't open attachments in emails unless you know who sent it and what it is.
- Use a pop-up blocker.
- Download and install software only from websites you know and trust.

Sources: IRS.gov, Seattle Police Dept. website,

**Police Department**  
1051 Junction Blvd.  
Roseville CA 95678  
(916) 774-5000  
[www.roseville.ca.us/police](http://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](mailto:PDCommunityServices@roseville.ca.us)  
**Graffiti Abatement**  
(916) 746-1021

**Police News & Crime Alert Emails:**  
[www.roseville.ca.us/enotify](http://www.roseville.ca.us/enotify)  
**RCONA**  
(Roseville Coalition Of Neighborhood Associations)  
[www.RCONA.org](http://www.RCONA.org)



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Vol. 17 Issue 03