

Boulevard Oaks Civic Association

Crime Prevention Tips

Confuse the Enemy - To fight crooks, HPD suggests **breaking up your daily routine** and vary the times that you leave and return to your home. If any one suspicious comes to your door asking for a fictitious person or trying to sell you a service you clearly do not need, call the Patrol immediately. Also, if you see anything unusual in the neighborhood - suspicious looking cars, pedestrians or anything that appears strange – **call the Southampton/Boulevard Oaks Patrol at 713-825-5555.**

Improve Exterior Lighting - One of the best deterrents is **outside home lighting. Burglars don't want to be seen.** Turn outside house lights, back and front, on. Street lighting is also important, so make sure your street lights are working. If not, report burned out street lights at <http://cnp.centerpointenergy.com/outage>.

Leave your porch light and exterior lights on all night – Dark shadows make great hiding places. Please turn on exterior and porch lights at night to help the Patrol see criminals in the neighborhood at night.

Locks - Keep your doors and windows locked and make sure you have double cylinder deadbolt locks with a minimum one-inch throw in the locked position. The deadbolts should use a heavy duty strike plate secured with three (3) inch steel screws.

Add Security Film to Strengthen Window Glass - Many homes in the neighborhood have beautiful glass doors or large windows in back, which are easy for criminals to case as well as to break in. It is not recommended to have glass on or near your doors but if you do, HPD recommends that you buy and apply safety/security window film made by 3M and Ace that can be purchased at many of the big hardware stores and makes it difficult for criminals to break the glass.

Security Systems - **Security systems (alarms) don't work unless you set them.** HPD also recommends that your alarm system includes an outdoor siren so that your neighbors will be alerted when your alarm goes off. The recent crooks have ripped security alarm wall units off the wall to stop the sirens, but even if they do that, the alarm will alert your security company.

Engrave Valuables – Should your electronics ever be stolen, they have a better chance of being recovered if they are engraved with your information. HPD will engrave your valuables free of charge if you bring them to HPD's South Central police station.

Get a dog(s) that barks – Many times crooks will go down the street ringing doorbells to see who is home and whether or not a dog will bark. If there is a threatening dog inside, criminals may choose another location. That said, small and/or friendly dogs do not seem to be much of a deterrent.

Carry your cell phone on walks – When walking for fun, exercise, or just walking the dog, please take your cell phone with you and report any suspicious activity to the Southampton/Boulevard Oaks Patrol. Program their number into your cell phone. The officer on duty can be reached at 713-825-5555.

Vacation Watch Service - Call the Patrol to make arrangements for vacation watch service if you will be away for a few days. Or send a message to SouthamptonBocaPatrol@yahoo.com.

Patrol Phone Stickers – Contact the Boulevard Oaks Civic Assn office (info@BoulevardOaks.org) to request telephone stickers.

No Solicitor Signs - Contact the Boulevard Oaks Civic Association office to request a No Solicitor sign to go above your doorbell. Specify bronze, brass, or aluminum finish to match your door hardware.

Prevent Auto Burglaries

Always lock your car, even when it is parked behind your locked/closed gate or in your unlocked garage/carport. No items of value should be visible, including loose change and GPS devices. Auto burglary is no longer a felony offense in Texas and is therefore an increasingly popular crime. Typically, neighborhood auto burglaries occur at night. Perpetrators will jump fences to test car door handles to see if they are unlocked. Simply locking your car will prevent your car from being rifled, damaged and your belongings from being stolen.

Hide Valuables – Burglars most often break in through the rear end of a home and go directly to the bedroom in search of jewelry. It is advisable to hide jewelry in another part of the house. Also, there has been a recent increase in “smash and grab” burglaries where criminals see a purse or wallet on a kitchen counter and smash the window, grab the goods and flee. Try to keep shades drawn or tempting valuable out of sight.

Crime-Stoppers is a great resource for more safety tips. Visit www.Crime-stoppers.org and click “Resource Center.”