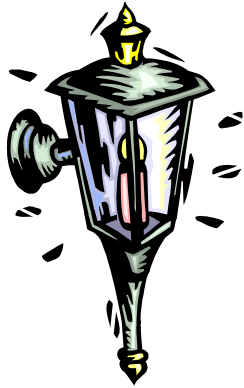


Many home invaders do not work alone. Their accomplices are usually nearby. The accomplice may be attempting to enter your home at another location while you are being distracted at the front door. Remember to keep all accessible doors and windows locked at all times. Be especially alert for sounds or indications of a second person, particularly if the person at the door tries to keep your attention away from the rear of the house for a long period of time.



Don't forget the lighting. A good, well-lighted exterior of your home can discourage many would-be criminals. Remember... If they can be seen or identified, they can be prosecuted in a court of law.

Consider investing in an alarm system with a "panic" feature. Do your homework and be sure to choose the right system for your needs.

Household burglary –

Unlawful or forcible entry or attempted entry of a residence. This crime usually, but not always, involves theft. The illegal entry may be by force, such as breaking a window or slashing a screen, or may be without force by entering through an unlocked door or an open window. As long as the person entering has no legal right to be present in the structure a burglary has occurred.

Neighborhood Watch –

Maintain good relations with your neighbors, and keep an eye on each other. Get involved with your community. If you see something suspicious at a neighbor's house, contact them or the police immediately. Take notes on any suspicious activity, including detailed descriptions of persons and vehicles. Follow through with police investigations, and criminal prosecutions.



PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE



HOME INVASIONS

BUREAU OF TRAINING & EDUCATION
COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT

09/2004



“Home Invasions” are becoming a serious threat to our citizens. A home invasion occurs when the criminal(s) enter a home with the intent to commit a crime. Unlike burglars who prefer the premises to be unoccupied, the home invader is fully prepared to confront the resident. Most often, the crime committed inside is theft. However, assaults, serious injury or even death can occur.

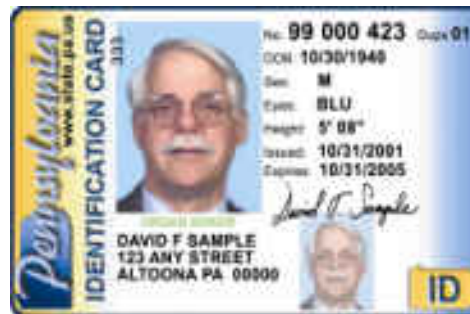
Many home invasions occur when the criminal gains entry into your home by trickery. They commonly pose as workers, delivery persons, or someone in distress. They may be offering to do work for you or simply asking directions. Many times they prey on older citizens who may be more trusting and less able to physically stop the crime or defend themselves. Although this type of crime is on the increase, there are steps you can take to help prevent the crime and protect yourself.

The following information includes some simple tips you can use to prevent a home invasion.

All exterior doors of your residence should be solid-core with heavy-duty deadbolt locks and hardware, and locked at all times. Access to the locking mechanisms via windows or glass should be minimal or non-existent. Peepholes should be installed and utilized prior to opening the door to anyone !

When there is someone at your door, call out or answer **“I’ll get it”**, as this will give the impression that you are not alone in the house.

Speak to all visitors through the locked door.



Demand identification from anyone who you do not know. This includes utility workers, delivery persons, repairmen and even police officers who are in plain clothes. Verify the identification by calling that place of business (or the person’s employer). Do **NOT** ask the person for the phone number, as they may have an accomplice answering the phone. You must look up the phone number and dial it yourself. Do **NOT** open the door until you are satisfied that it is safe to do so. If you cannot verify their identity, keep the door closed and locked. Call 911 if you feel uncomfortable with the situation.

Secure all doors and windows with secondary locking devices.

If someone claims to be in distress or needs assistance or directions, tell them you are calling the police to respond.

If you have a cordless or cellular telephone, keep it handy for summoning emergency help if necessary.

Consider investing in self-defense training or pepper spray and have it handy when answering the door. If you have small children, make sure they do not have access to any weapons in your home.

Teach your children and babysitter(s) about the safety risks of opening or answering the door without an adult present.

Senior citizens or women living alone might consider leaving items such as a pair of men’s boots or other garments laying about, giving the impression that other persons reside there.

Consider owning a dog for protection. If this isn’t possible, an empty dog bowl left on the porch gives the impression that there is a dog on the premises.

