

**Southern Pines Police Department**  
**Safety Tips**  
*Home Safety*

***Travelling***

Remember to take precautions while you are away from home. Before you leave, make sure that your home looks lived in, not empty: stop mail and cancel all deliveries or ask a friend or neighbor to make daily checks. Have this person go into the residence and check to insure that there are no water or other problems. Follow these other suggestions to minimize your risk: Leave shades and blinds in normal positions; Put an automatic timer on several lights in different rooms; Have a trusted friend or neighbor maintain your property and leave a key with them; Also tell them your departure and arrival dates and times; Supply an itinerary with phone numbers where you can be reached in case of an emergency; Remove all valuables from the home and store them in a safe deposit box; Lock all windows and doors, double check basement and garage doors before you leave. The Southern Pines Police Department provides an “Unattended Property Check” service where officers will check your home for signs of suspicious activity on a periodic basis during your absence. For more information on this free service or to schedule your home to be included, fill out the form on the FAQ page of our website.

***General***

A simple home improvement step to reduce the chance of unlawful entry to your premises is to replace outside lighting with motion activated lights. Would-be burglars are often scared off by these lights, since they can alert the owner, neighbors or passers-by to activity around the building. Additionally, good lighting can expose their description to observant neighbors. Interested in other ideas to help lessen the chance your property will be targeted for a criminal act? Contact us to schedule a Security Survey. Look at the FAQ section of our website for more information.

When temperatures rise, many of us leave our windows open in an attempt to cool off. At night and when you are out, remember to close and lock all first floor windows or windows that have easy access from the outside, such as those that are accessible from a low roof. Burglars have been known to use the easy method of cutting the screen to enter a home and commit their crimes. While air circulation is important, you may be able to accomplish the same goal through the use of upstairs windows or fans installed in strategic places.

Some general tips to help keep your home safe:

- Keep all doors and windows securely fastened
- Secure sliding doors by placing a metal rod on the track and install vertical bolts
- Always ensure that your door to an enclosed garage is locked; do not rely on the garage door
- Use timers on radios, lights and televisions to give the illusion that someone is home
- Keep the perimeter of your home well lighted
- Never leave clues that you are not home; have a neighbor pick up mail and papers
- Keep some shades and blinds up and curtains open to look as if someone is home
- Never leave a message on a machine that you are away
- Keep shrubbery trimmed away from entrances, windows, and walkways
- Organize a community watch program to protect your neighborhood

**For more information or a presentation on this topic, contact the Community Services Coordinator at (910) 692-2732.**