

Keeping You and Your Family Safe

There are a few easy things you can do to keep you and your home safer. Just a quick walkthrough of your home with this checklist can help you. Let's start at your front door...

DOORS

- The door is made of solid wood or metal with a peep hole
- The windows are at least 40" away from the door so they can't break a window and then reach in unlocking and opening the door
- The door hinges are on the inside so they can't be removed from the outside
- The door frames are strong and tight enough to prevent forcing or spreading
- There are quality door locks that are in working order
- There is a dead bolt lock with a key turn on both sides as well as a regular lock
- The door strikes and plates are properly installed with 3 ½" to 4" screws
- The doorknob and locks cannot be reached through a mail slot, delivery port or pet entrance
- The screen door or glass storm door has a working lock
- The front door can be seen easily from the street and the house numbers are easily visible for emergency personnel to see if they need to come to your home.
- The sliding glass doors have pins or screws that keep it from being lifted out of the track and there is a charley-bar to keep it closed
- All exterior doors meet these standards, including the ones into a garage and the one from the garage into the home.
- Door to the basement locks so they can't come up from the basement into the home
- Keys are not kept under the mat, on the frame above the door or in a flower pot - they are with a trusted neighbor or family nearby.
- There is a pet sticker for firemen to alert the number of animals in the home
- There is an "In Case of Emergency" sticker on the front door to match the medical information tube in the freezer. 1-800-914-9488

WINDOWS

- The windows have working locks and are kept locked at all times when not in use
- Windows have locking pins so they can't be forced open when cracked for fresh air
- The screens and storm windows lock from the inside
- Windows that open onto hazardous or high risk areas have security screens and grills
- Windows are not blocked by bushes or other items
- Trees and large shrubs are trimmed away from upper windows so they can't be climbed
- Both lower and upper story windows have alarm sensors on them
- Window air conditioning units are secured and cannot be easily pulled out
- Windows are all closed and locked before leaving home each time
- Curtains are pulled at night so the home and contents are not easily viewed
- Valuables are not left visible from windows
- Basement windows lock and are secure
- Kitchen sink window is locked and secure

GARAGE DOORS

- It closes and locks
- Is not left open, even when you are at home and inside
- Has safety sensors to prevent injury when closing
- Has a harder key pad number ~ not 1-2-3-4 or a birthday
- Is covered so when entering the number others cannot see it being entered
- Expensive items like snow blowers and bikes are chained and locked to the garage wall when not in use
- Tools are locked and secure with tool drawers not easily seen when the door is open
- Garage door windows and other windows are covered and blocked with opaque contact paper and locking grids

LIGHTING

- Entrances are well lit with downward facing light and also have motion sensors
- There is more than one lamp in the home with a light timer and they are set to different times and not on an exact hour or half hour. Example: 5:19 pm
- Flood lights are positioned into the exact area and not where they will disturb the neighbor's sleep at night if turned on
- Bulbs are energy efficient
- Streetlights are in working order, if not, call 3-1-1
- There are flashlights available in the home

ALLEYS

- Motion detection flood light (a double, adjustable one is best) mounted on either the garage, back of house or shed, whichever is closest to the alley.
- Pole-mounted light in the alley, if there isn't one you can call I&M / AEP to request one
- Bushes or trees are trimmed around garage doors and so they do not block the lighting

PET SAFETY

- Locked fence gates and checked for areas they can dig or crawl out
- Pets are chipped (available at South Bend Animal Care & Control) and have a ten digit phone number tag so someone can call you immediately
- Dog thefts are increasing, watch them while they are out and especially at bedtime

HOME ALARM SAFETY

- Control panel is not visible from a door or window to show if it is armed or not
- PIN number is has a harder key pad number ~ not 1-2-3-4 or a birthday
- Battery backup in the event of a power outage
- Signs and stickers posted
- Video camera lens are clean and aimed correctly
- Batteries in wireless components are working

COMPUTER / NETWORK SECURITY

- Network has at least WPA2 level security with a LONG password for WiFi Firewall so your information is not available to someone going past your home
- Close all browsers and open a new one before banking online and then close it when done
- Using a computer security software
- Passwords are different for all accounts
- Monitoring online game playing since there is often a chat function predators use to reach kids. Also look into "Net Nanny" type software if you have children online.
- Credit is frozen to reduce Identity thefts and credit is checked for free once a year at: www.AnnualCreditReport.com (Official site)
- Credit Cards with the RFID chips on them are kept in a blocking wallet or pouch

GENERAL

- Don't let strangers in without seeing ID and confirming they are legitimate
- Make sure people working for you are licensed and bonded. You may also want to check the Better Business Bureau, Yelp, Angie's List and other rating services.
- Keep ladders, rocks and other equipment that could aid a burglary inside / locked up
- Work with your neighbors to spot unusual events and look out for each other

Contact **Crime Prevention Services** for additional information or to join your **South Bend Neighborhood Watch 574-235-9037**

www.AreaVibes.com/south+bend-in/crime/
www.City-Data.com/crime/crime-South-Bend-Indiana.html
www.CrimeReports.com

Thanks for helping to keep your home and neighborhood safer!

For more valuable resources, see **SOUTH BEND PSA** on Facebook and see www.AARPMichiana.org for meeting times.