

# Senior Safety

## Crime Prevention for Senior Citizens

One of the best ways to take an active part in crime prevention is to become more alert and aware of what's going on around you.

Each person should adopt a more observant and active attitude daily. Thus, you become more aware of strange cars, persons or circumstances which might be dangerous and require calling the police.

Not every stranger you encounter is a criminal by any means, but criminals will look for easy opportunities to get something of value.

### **Don't Be a Victim Of Fraud**

If someone offers a deal that sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Yet everyday people get taken in by different schemes.

Con artists defraud and cheat unsuspecting citizens out of several billion dollars each year. The swindler's prime target is the senior citizen. Swindlers see the elderly as easy marks for many reasons. Many senior citizens live on social security and pensions supplemented by savings. They may be looking for ways to increase their incomes through investments, home business opportunities or retirement properties.

Most con artists promise "incredible bargains" or "quick money." Unfortunately, senior citizens are just as vulnerable as everybody else when it comes to get-rich-quick schemes.

Swindlers are usually well-dressed, talkative and intelligent. After all, they are trying to win your confidence.

### Con Artist Schemes

#### **Con artist schemes come in a variety of situations. Just to name a few, BEWARE OF:**

The Phony Bank Examiner Scheme- a telephone caller will identify himself as a bank examiner who is trying to weed out a disloyal employee by getting you to withdraw money from your bank account and turn it over to them.

Pigeon Drop- the swindler will claim to have found a large sum of money with you being the witness to the findings. A second person will come into the scene and help to convince you to put up good faith money, switch the real money with phony money and leave you holding the bag.

Buying at the Door Schemes- someone might come to your door and offer to sell home insulation, energy saving devices or burglar bars. BEWARE! Do not purchase or sign any contracts without first having it examined by someone you know and trust. Also, check with the Better Business Bureau to see if this company is legitimate.

Remember, anything that sounds too good to be true might be just that. So, talk to your bank officer before withdrawing a large sum of money from your bank account to make a purchase or close a deal. Remember, most criminals look for the easiest way to get something of value.

### Purse Snatch

"Purse snatching" is a common crime, but not widely publicized. Any woman is a target for this offense, even though elderly women seem to be more vulnerable.

You can minimize your chances of becoming a victim of purse snatching by following these simple rules:

Do not carry a shoulder bag over your shoulder. This makes it easier for a suspect to grab the bag, knock you down and cause bodily injury.

Carry a small clutch-type handbag underneath your arm. This will prevent bodily injury from occurring in the event of a purse snatch.

Do not carry large sums of money, valuable jewelry or all of your credit cards in your purse.

Carry only what you plan to use for the day. This includes one check instead of the whole checkbook or one credit card.

Do not walk with your purse dangling from your person.

Do not leave your purse in shopping carts or on counters.

The most frequent areas for purse snatching are bus stops, grocery stores, and shopping center parking lots.

The harder you make it, the less likely you are to become a victim of a crime