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Homeland . Workplace . Residential . Public . Terrorism



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Top Ten Residential Security Checklist

Richard L. Soloway, chairman of NAPCO Security Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: NSSC) has created the following residential security checklist to ensure home safety:

1. **ARE YOUR DOORS LOCKED AT ALL TIMES?** – It sounds simple, but in nearly half of all home burglaries, intruders enter through an unlocked door, inside garage door or patio. Lock your doors even if you are just "running to the store or to a neighbor's house."
2. **DO YOU KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS?** Get to know your neighbors, as friendly, caring neighbors are your first line of defense. Watch out for your suspicious activity in your neighborhood. Join a Neighborhood Watch group if it's available, and start one if necessary! Find out more from the National Crime Prevention Council at <http://www.ncpc.org>.
3. **IS YOUR HOME SHIELDED FROM YOU BY SHRUBBERY?** Trees and hedges that are trimmed give intruders fewer places to hide or be concealed from view when an intrusion is attempted.
4. **LIGHTS OUT; NOBODY HOME?** Burned out outdoor lights signal that the homeowner may be away. Using the cover of night, thieves generally target homes with burned-out or generally insufficient outdoor lighting. Consider upgrading outdoor light fixtures with devices that have built-in motion detectors that turn on the lights whenever anyone walks past or schedule lighting with a routine that matches dawn and dusk of the time of year.
5. **ARE YOU PREDICTIBLE?** Thieves know the predictable hiding places and where most of us keep our valuables. A jewelry box on top of the dresser is practically a homing signal as well as your dresser drawers, the freezer, under the mattress and your cookie jar!
6. **IS YOUR HOUSE CASH RICH?** Avoid keeping large amounts of cash and jewelry in your house. Thieves are looking for cash and easy-to-carry things they can turn into cash quickly: jewelry, silver, cameras and other electronic devices. Keep small luxury items locked in a safe or well hidden. Large items don't scare crooks off either – TVs, VCRs, computers and stereos get their attention too. Invest in a simple table/desk bolt for stereos, computers and VCRs. If it's too difficult to steal most thieves, looking to get in and out quickly, won't bother. Get a safe deposit box for heirloom items and things of value that your rarely use.
7. **DO YOU HAVE A SECURITY SYSTEM?** Homes without security systems are about three times more likely to be broken into than those without. 90% of police believe alarm systems deter burglary attempts. Losses due to burglaries average \$400 less in residences with security systems than those without. Seeking the easiest possible course of action, homes without alarm lawn signs and stickers are vulnerable, especially if they are a rarity in your neighborhood—you'll stick out by exception in this regard.
8. **DO YOU HAVE A SMOKE DETECTOR?** Since most fire fatalities happen at night while victims are asleep, and most fire victims are killed by toxic and smoldering smoke and gases, not the fire itself, an early warning signal is very important. Contrary to a popular belief, the smell of smoke does not always wake sleeping persons. Instead the poisonous gases and smoke produced by the fire can put sleeping persons into an even deeper sleep by depriving them of oxygen. Only a working smoke detector can provide the early warning signal needed in a fire emergency. Smoke detectors are designed to sound a loud, distinctive alarm that will wake sleeping persons from a deep sleep, giving them enough time to escape their burning home. The best smoke detectors are part of your security system, so when they go off, your monitoring company alerts the authorities!
9. **DO YOU HAVE A CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR?** While we are encouraged to seal off our homes from all drafts and air leaks in the winter to conserve energy, this practice also adds to the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning. Typically a furnace, small camp stove, lantern or other heating appliance produces this gas. Carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless, and deadly. Again carbon monoxide detectors are best as an integral part of your security system, instead of relying on a sound to awaken you from a deep sleep.

Carbon monoxide detectors often look just like smoke detectors and are mounted with screws in the same way smoke detectors are also. They should be mounted in the same places in your home as smoke detectors are, but also in temporary sleeping locations like campers, RV's, etc. If you or your family has flu like symptoms during the heating season and experience headaches and nausea mixed with drowsiness, these are carbon monoxide symptoms you may be experiencing.
10. **DO YOU HIDE YOUR KEYS?** Be careful with your keys. Many burglaries don't require forcible entry. Don't hide a key in the mailbox. Don't leave a spare key over the doorway. And never leave your house key under the mat. These are very common hiding places and the thieves know where to look. Don't put ID tags on your key ring, much less anything with your address. Don't give a potentially unscrupulous person finds them, and know where the keys are to!