



Crime Prevention Tips

- Tip #1** Use caution when conducting transactions at ATMs. Nationwide, there have been cases reported where PIN numbers have been obtained by criminals standing behind the ATM user with a cell phone camera. Usually you can shield your PIN number by placing your body between someone behind you and the keypad - or better yet, if someone is standing in very close proximity to you, ask the person to exercise proper etiquette by standing further back- or leave and conduct your transaction at another time or place.
- Tip #2** Leave the ringer volume on your telephone at a low level when you are not home- especially if away on vacation. Hearing an unanswered phone can be a tip off that your home is empty. Similarly, if you use an answering machine, leave the volume on that down also so that someone on the outside cannot hear it.
- Tip #3** Help your senior citizen friends and relatives avoid being the victims of fraud. Remind them to always check with a trusted friend or relative before committing to any substantial financial transactions. They should be advised to follow this practice even if it is a family member involved in the proposal.
- Tip #4** If you are going on vacation, take crime prevention with you. For starters, prepare for your trip if you are going to unfamiliar areas by obtaining maps and formulating a travel plan with directions beforehand. This could help prevent you from getting lost in possibly dangerous, unfamiliar territory. Stopping for directions in such conditions could be hazardous. If you must ask directions, do so at a busy public area such as a gas station or travel plaza, rather than from pedestrians.
- Tip #5** Inventory and mark your valuables throughout your home and store the records in a safe place. This can help with insurance claims and recovery of property in case your home is ever burglarized. Use your driver's license number as an identifier rather than your social security number- law enforcement cannot readily trace property through social security numbers.

TIPS are extracted from various Annapolis Police Department *"Neighborhood Watch - Community Policing Reports,"* which are available daily at the website: [Annapolis Daily Police Report](http://www.annapolis.gov/government/depts/police/commevents.asp) (<http://www.annapolis.gov/government/depts/police/commevents.asp>).