

# Collier Township Police Department Home Security & Safety Checklist

## Purpose

This checklist is designed to help resident's become more aware of certain safety issues that impact the security and safety of their homes or apartments. It is not intended to include all issues that could be considered, but is useful in starting the process of thinking about safety issues and perhaps making changes that would help protect you, your family and property.

## Burglary Awareness

When burglars target a home they are looking for easy targets. They may observe a weakness and attempt to take something or enter the home. These are often called "crimes of opportunity" because burglars see an opportunity for an easy theft. No house is absolutely burglar-proof but you can discourage them if you "harden the target" so criminals will not think your home is an easy opportunity. Generally, if they find that it will be too difficult they will quickly leave.

Most burglaries are not well planned. Criminals may be on the prowl to steal something and when they see an easy target or something of value they just go for it. Many burglars are juveniles or young adults, often from or familiar with the neighborhood. Most home burglaries occur in the daytime. Most burglars enter through unlocked doors or windows. It takes less than two minutes for the average burglar to enter a home. If they can be delayed for just three minutes, most burglars will give up and leave. The risk of being seen or heard will deter most burglars. In difficult economic times burglars become more brazen and will take more risks, sometimes entering a home before finding out someone is home, this is a dangerous situation and you may need to "harden the target" to help protect yourself and your family.

## Self Evaluation or Police Department Evaluation

This evaluation checklist can be completed by yourself or you can request a member from the Collier Township Police Department to visit your home and make a physical review of your residence with you. If you complete the evaluation yourself and have questions, please call the Police Department@ (412)276-5051 and we would be happy to help you.

## ➤ **Perimeter Security**

### 1. Doors

- Do all of your exterior doors have a good-quality deadbolt lock with no less than a 1" throw?
- Are all latch-strike plates on your exterior doors secured with at least 3" screws?
- Do your exterior doors having glass within 3 feet of the lock have double-cylinder deadbolts installed on them?
- Do all of your exterior doors without glass have a wide-angle door viewer installed for identifying visitors?
- Are all exterior doors constructed of solid wood, reinforced wood metal?
- Have you changed the locks since moving into your home or apartment(who else has keys)?
- Do you always lock all your doors when you are home for the night or when you leave your residence?

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- Do not leave or hide a spare key under the door mat or anywhere else near the entry.

### **2. Sliding Glass Doors**

- Do all your sliding glass doors have at least one of the following?
  - track lock
  - insertion pin lock
  - hinged door bar
  - metal or wooden dowel in track
- Do your auxiliary locks prevent the door from being lifted out of its track?
- Do you have built in shades or blinds on the doors?
- Do you leave any items near the doors that could be used to break the glass?

### **3. Garage Doors**

- If your overhead garage door is equipped with an automatic opener, does it use a "rolling code" to foil "code grabbers"?
- If your overhead garage door is not equipped with an automatic opener, does it have good-quality padlocks on both sides of the door?
- Do your exterior man-doors and the doors from the garage into your home have quality deadbolts? Are they always used?
- Do you always close your overhead garage door, even when you are home?

### **4. Windows**

- Are all your windows secured with an auxiliary keyed window lock?
- Are the keys readily available in an emergency?
- If you do not have keyed locks, are your windows additionally secured by pins or nails?
- Have your auxiliary window locks been installed to allow ventilation while maintaining security?
- Are you as careful of basement and second floor windows as you are of those on the first floor?

### **5. Exterior Lighting**

- Is your front entrance lit well enough to enable you to identify visitors at night?
- Are all other entrances illuminated well?

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- Do floodlights or some other type of area illumination cover all exterior sections of your home or property?
- Do motion sensors control your exterior lighting?

### **6. Landscaping**

- Are all your bushes, trees and shrubs trimmed to eliminate areas for a person to hide near your doors and windows?
- Have tree limbs been trimmed to prevent access to upper floor windows or balconies?
- Have you planted "prickly" or thorny shrubbery near windows to discourage loitering or hiding?
- Is all exterior foliage trimmed to prevent obstruction of exterior lighting?

### **7. Exterior Entries and Possessions**

- Are all your gates locked with a quality weatherproof padlock?
- Are all sheds or outbuildings secured with a quality weatherproof padlock?
- Are all valuables stored outside (bikes, ladders, lawn mowers, motorcycles, etc.) secured to a fixed, immovable object?
- Do you lock your car and take the keys out even when it is parked in your garage?
- Have you photographed and video taped the contents of your home? Also keep a list of all serial numbers of all your valuables (guns, TV, VCR, lawn mower) in a fire box or safe.
- Have you told your family what to do if they discover a burglar breaking in or already in the house? Have you told your family to leave the house undisturbed and call the police if they discover a burglary has been committed?

### **8. Swimming Pool Safety**

- Are all exterior doors / gates leading to your pool area equipped with a specific door alarm that alerts you when someone has entered?
- If your pool area has a secondary fence, are the gates secured with a gate lock or auxiliary padlock?
- Is your pool area or property line surrounded by a fence (check with code officer for specifics)?
- Is every member of your household trained in CPR?
- Are chemicals stored away from the reach of children and animals?

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- Are all electronics kept far enough away from the water?
- In ground pools are wheeled conveyances (bikes, baby buggies, baby walkers, children's toys with wheels on them) kept outside the pool area?

### ➤ Interior Security

#### 1. While You're Away

- Do you have several lights in your home set up on automatic timers?
- Do you have a working home alarm system?
- Do you always remember to arm the alarm before you leave?
- Did you know that your alarm systems should be armed when you will be in your backyard for any length of time?
- Do you discontinue mail and newspaper service when away from home on vacation or business?
- Do you arrange for a friend or neighbor to come by and check on your home when you plan on being away several days or longer?
- Does your telephone answering machine avoid announcing: "We're not home right now?"
- Did you notify Collier Township Police (vacation checks) with emergency contact info?

#### 2. Gun Safety

- Are all guns safely stored in a locked box, safe, or vault?
- Are all guns stored separately from the ammunition?
- Are guns that are intended for home protection equipped with a trigger guard lock?
- Have all members of your household been trained to treat every gun as though it were loaded?
- Are all of your guns out of reach of children or in place that is not accessible to them?
- Free gun locks are available at the Collier Township Police Station 8am-4pm M-F
- Do you have accurate records (serial #, purchase & sale receipts) of all the firearms in your household?

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## ➤ Home Safety

### 1. Fire and Carbon Monoxide

- Do you have a smoke detector in each of the following areas?
  - hallways near bedrooms
  - near family room and kitchen
  - top of any stairway
  - garage, and storage area
- Are there carbon monoxide detectors in the same areas as your smoke detectors? Is there an additional carbon monoxide detector near your furnace?
- Are there ABC-type fire extinguishers in your kitchen, garage, and basement?
- Do all members of your household know exactly what to do in case of fire or other emergency?
- Do you test your smoke detectors once a month?
- Do you replace the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors twice a year?(Hint: Do this when we change our clocks from standard time to daylight savings time and back.)
- Are all flammables stored in original marked containers away from sources of heat or flame?
- Are all of your valuable documents and possessions stored in a fire-rated safe? Is the safe bolted to the floor or wall?
- Do you have a predetermined escape plan in case of a home emergency and do you have a safety meeting point for your family to meet up at?
- Have you filled out an emergency contact form which is available at Collier Township Police Department? They are kept secure and can be used in an emergency situation to contact you or a contact should the need arise.