

Crime Prevention Tips and Resources (Updated January 25, 2015)

Crime prevention tips:

Don't try to stop thieves - just call the situation in immediately. Call 272-3121 for routine suspicious activity or to report a crime that has been committed. Call 911 if a crime is taking place. 272-1111 gets you a dispatcher or call taker, not a policeman 243-6990 is the substation on Brook Street (but it's not manned 24/7) 421-2489 mayor's office of neighborhood help.

“Easy grabs” are what thieves are looking for

Park in well-lit areas and lock your car

Use your alarm; shrubs should be away from windows; get light sensors

Try to get a good description of the suspect

If you see something suspicious, say you want to talk to a police officer; don't just call & leave your name and contact information

Write down the serial numbers of any items in your home (particularly electronics) you think may be of interest to thieves.

- There is a national database and all used electronic equipment has to be reported to it when it is purchased in used condition. Pawn shops are required to wait 2 weeks before selling electronics, providing the victim the chance to reclaim it. The way the victim enters the data is through the police department when the report is filed, but the police need the serial numbers.
- According to the Attorney General's Office, the punishment for not reporting used equipment purchases to the database is a misdemeanor with only <1 yr and/or <\$500, without a minimum (?), perhaps the penalty can be increased, though this may be a state issue.
- According to the Providence Board of Licenses, Providence shops city have to be licensed to sell used electronic equipment, though the shop that bought Rep Tobon's iPad Mini did not have a license to sell used equipment (I checked at the Board of Licenses at City Hall).
- Additionally, the AG's office told me that the shop broke the law if they bought used equipment from a minor, unless an adult was present at the time, which seems unlikely since both thieves were 17 yrs. old. The police are looking into this, possibly the place is serving as a front. I understand the shops have to take a picture of the seller's ID when goods are purchased.
- If the items are found in someone's car, police can call the serial numbers in and if they're listed as stolen, the person can be charged with “receiving stolen goods” and brought in for questioning

DO NOT EVER leave your car running and leave the area for any reason TVs, laptops, jewelry and guns are the primary items thieves want

Don't leave ladders out anywhere on your property

Check Craig's list after a break-in as stolen items sometimes show up there

Having an alarm company sticker on the doors/windows is a helpful deterrent

Do not keep your computer/laptop visible or near a window

Call in the license plate if it looks like a suspicious vehicle

Ask for an ID before you talk to anyone who comes to the door or just tell them you're busy and don't even open the door

Before you leave home, shout into the house "I'll be back soon" - if anyone's listening, that may deter them from a possible break-in

Check the Providence Police website for more information (sex offenders are listed including their addresses)

Frontdoorsoftwaresecurity.com is like lojack for computers

If you see something that strikes you as odd or unusual behavior, report it quickly & you may help catch someone

Google "How to make my property safe?" for more safety tips

Resources:

To learn about how to start your own crime watch, contact the following:

Jay Tavares jaytavares@gmail.com (leader of successful crime watch in West Broadway)

Allison Spooner aspoonerchna@gmail.com (started mini-watch on her block)

Monica Anderson MAAnderson5@Lifespan.org (part of successful crime watch in Summit neighborhood)

Katiuska Perez 401-421-7740 x718 kperez@providenceri.com (Mayor's office of Neighborhood Services, assists in forming crime watches)

Consider joining the The College Hill Neighborhood Association, which has a wealth of other information as well. You can join the Association for \$20 per year by logging onto their website at www.Collegehillneighborhoodassociation.org