

TIP SHEET



Personal Safety

In the home, on the street, at work

Personal safety is a concern for all of us. A lot can be achieved by just using good common sense. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and do not place yourself in situations which might jeopardize your safety.



IN YOUR HOME

- Don't unlock your door to strangers. Learn to speak through the closed door. It's not impolite; it is safer.
- Install quality locks and use them. (Ask for the Home Security tip sheets).
- Avoid using chain locks. They present little deterrent to an aggressive person.
- Your door should be equipped with a door viewer.
- Don't hide keys outside. Leave them with a trusted neighbour.
- Secure all windows. Draw window shades or drapes after dark and don't leave accessible windows open when you are away or asleep.
- Never open the door to strangers. Verify identification of visitors, sales and service people. Check with the company to see if they sent a representative.
- Should a stranger request to use your phone, do not allow the person to enter your home. Offer to make the call for them. Even if it's a woman, don't unlock your door.

- Don't reveal personal information to anyone on the phone or at your door.

ON THE STREET

- Plan your route and avoid short cuts through parks, vacant lots or unlit areas.
- Know where police stations or after hour stores are located.
- Avoid being alone if you can. Get a friend to accompany you. If they can't, let them know the route you're taking. Call when you arrive.
- Don't carry large sums of money or unnecessary valuables. Use cash alternatives such as debit cards.
- Don't carry a purse; use waistbelts instead.
- Don't leave purses unattended in shopping carts or on store counters.
- If someone grabs your purse, do not resist.

USING BANK MACHINES

- Whenever possible, use bank machines in visible and active areas during active periods.

- If you must use a bank machine during inactive periods, consider using a drive-through.
- Avoid after hours access to bank machines where you are not visible or cannot see into the bank machine area prior to entering it.
- Avoid using bank machines in areas that you are unfamiliar at night.
- If you absolutely must access a bank machine after hours in an unfamiliar area, consider using the buddy system or drive around the area before you access your cash or get out of your car.
- Avoid using a bank machine if the door lock seems defective.
- Be prepared to start your banking as soon as you arrive at the machine.
- Be aware of your surroundings and always make sure that no one has the opportunity to see you entering your pin number or look over your shoulder.
- Don't leave anything behind.



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WORKPLACE

- Avoid isolated or deserted stairways.
- Call security or the police if you see someone in the building you don't recognize.
- If working after hours, keep all doors and windows locked.
- Try and arrange to have a co-worker stay with you.
- When you finish working, go to your vehicles together. Ensure the other is safely in their vehicle and on their way before you leave. Leave together if possible.
- If the company has security, advise them you're working late and ask if they can check in on you periodically.
- Advise security when you're leaving and have them escort you to your vehicle.
- If alone, contact your family/friend and advise them that you'll be working late and will call before you leave and advise them of your route home.

USING ELEVATORS

- While waiting for an elevator, stand off to the side; this gives you the opportunity to view inside and removes your obligation to enter if you are unsure of the occupants. If in doubt concerning people in an elevator, wait for the next elevator.

- If someone gets on the elevator after you and you're not comfortable with them, get off. Stand near the control panel.
- If confronted, push all the floor buttons and the emergency button, DO NOT push the stop button; you may get trapped between floors.

BEFORE YOU ENTER YOUR CAR

- Keep your vehicle in good repair, including plenty of gas and maps.
- Check your vehicle's fluid levels and tire pressure regularly.
- Obtain a "call police" sign and emergency kit in the event of a break down.
- Carry an ice scraper and shovel in your car during the winter months.
- Buy a cellular telephone and keep the batteries charged (at least every 60 days). Consider a cigarette lighter adapter to save batteries.
- Have your keys in hand so you do not have to linger before entering your car.
- View the interior of your vehicle before entering to ensure no one is hiding inside, even if the doors were locked. Visually check the outside as well.

WHILE IN YOUR CAR

- Always lock your car after entering and when leaving it.
- Keep the windows closed.
- Know your route and follow it.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Park keeping in mind what the environment will be like when you return. Will it be dark? If so, park near lights.
- If possible, reverse your vehicle in to the spot for a clearer view upon exiting.

IF YOU BECOME STRANDED

- Keep doors locked and windows rolled up. If you open your window, only open it to the point of breaking the seal, no further.
- If a stranger offers to help, do not get out of your car. Ask the person to call for assistance or advise them the police are on the way.
- Place a "call police" sign in the window.
- Remember 9-1-1 on a cellular telephone does not give police your location. Know where you are so that emergency services can locate you.
- Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist. Call for assistance for them.



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THINK YOU ARE BEING FOLLOWED?

- Do not drive home. You do not want this person to know where you live.
- If you suspect that someone is following you, drive to the nearest police station, open service station or drive-in restaurant. Stay in your vehicle and use the horn to draw attention to yourself.
- Try to obtain the licence plate number of the vehicle following you, as well as make, model, colour and a description of the driver.

WHAT ABOUT ROAD RAGE? WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Pay attention to your driving. Do not drive while talking on your cell phone.
- Keep to the right when driving at the speed limit.
- Avoid tailgating, flashing headlights or cutting other people off.
- Switch the radio station, if you're being aggravated by what you hear.
- Use your signals and be courteous.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF ROAD RAGE?

- If someone is acting aggressively toward you, avoid eye contact while driving.
- If someone approaches your vehicle acting aggressively, drive away if you can.
- Do not leave the relative safety of your vehicle.
- Do not issue or respond to verbal taunts.
- Get a description of the vehicle and occupant(s) including licence plate.

PARKING

- Always make a mental note of where you've parked.
- If you are in a parking structure know where the nearest exit is and where you intend to go before you exit your vehicle.
- Try to walk to your vehicle in pairs.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Know the schedules and sit near the driver. During the evening hours ask the driver to let you off near your destination as part of their request stop program.
- Use caution in conversations with strangers. Avoid giving your name, address or place of employment. Avoid clothing or items that identify you or your profession.
- Have someone meet you at your stop.