

Van Zandt County Precinct Watch Program Crime Prevention Tips

Subject: Personal Safety



Just what does personal safety involve? It involves many things, but the most important item is your personal conscious decision to implement a plan to make your daily life more secure from crime opportunity.

Here are a few tips that will enhance your ability to increase your level of personal safety at home and away from home:

At Home;

- Keep doors and Windows closed and locked
- Keep blinds and curtains closed at night
- Install and use a "190-degree peep-hole" in your doors
- Don't give out personal or financial information over the telephone or internet
- Organize a neighborhood crime watch group
- Don't allow strangers to enter your home
- Call police if you see suspicious activity
- Don't leave valuables where they can be seen outside your home
- Mark your valuables with your driver's license number and join the Operation Identification program (OID)
- Have a security survey conducted at your home and/or business
- Purchase insurance
- Purchase an electronic home security system

Away from home;

- Be aware of your surroundings
 - People
 - Places
 - Escape route
- Be aware of anyone that appears to be unusually agitated
- Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes, and entry ways.
- Keep your vehicle doors locked at all times
- If you are being followed, drive to the nearest open business for help or drive to a police or fire station. If you are on foot, walk to a crowded area and start knocking on doors, and attract as much attention as possible.
- When parking at dusk or later, select a place away from brush and trash bins that will be well illuminated when you return
- Don't carry large amounts of money
- If you carry a purse, carry it in front of you or under your jacket
- If a person approaches you for directions, avoid getting too near them
- When walking...Walk with a purpose and look like you know where you are going. Walk briskly and confidently
- Carry an alarm device and use it if necessary
- Have a plan prepared and determine your level of resolve
- Practice your plan of action

Remember that no plan of action, advice, method, etc. is 100% effective against all crime opportunities! The best advice is to increase your awareness regarding your personal safety and be prepared to do whatever is necessary to prevent you from becoming a crime victim!

There are seven basic steps to personal safety:

1. **Realize that you are vulnerable!**
2. **Mentally commit to doing everything you can do to stay safe!**
3. **Know your environment!**
4. **Get away by creating and maintaining distance!**
5. **If confronted, stop the confrontation then get away!**
6. **Immediately notify law enforcement!**
7. **Deal with post-traumatic stress!**