



## BURGLARY



According to the FBI, a burglary occurs in the United States every 15.4 seconds. 49 burglaries took place within the Briar Forest Super Neighborhood boundaries in September, 2009. 31, or sixty-three percent, of the burglaries took place in apartment units. Seven, or fourteen percent, of the burglaries took place in single family residences during that same time period. These burglaries actually represent less than 1 percent of all the burglaries taking place across Houston during the very same time period. Regardless, being a victim within the 1 percent can leave one feeling 100 percent violated, helpless and/or angry.

The risk of being burglarized can be greatly reduced by taking simple steps to make your home more difficult to enter and less enticing to would-be burglars. Remember the greatest weapons in the fight to prevent burglaries are **light, time and noise**.



**Please consider the following crime prevention suggestions:**

IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 911  
IF YOU LIVE IN A CONTRACT NEIGHBORHOOD, CONSTABLE: 281.463.6666



#### SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES

- Install and use exterior lights (light timers can be easily installed on interior light switches so that the exterior lights come on when you are not home).
- If possible, make sure that exterior lights are mounted out of reach, so that burglars can't easily unscrew bulbs.
- Consider installing motion-sensitive lights.
- Use variable light timers to activate lights inside and outside your home.
- Trim trees and shrubs especially near doors and windows so burglars can't hide in the shadows. A burglar can easily step behind shrubbery and avoid being seen by a deputy constable or HPD officer driving by at 20 mph. Don't give burglars places to hide at night.
- Make it time-consuming for a burglar to break into your home by:
  1. Installing deadbolt locks with a one-inch throw bolt on all exterior doors. Use high quality Grade-1 or Grade-2 locks. A quality deadbolt lock will have a beveled casing to inhibit the use of channel-lock pliers used to shear off lock cylinder pins.
  2. Installing double key locks in doors which contain glass. This will keep a burglar from being able to open the door simply by breaking the glass and reaching through. (Note: so that everyone in the house can get out in the event of a fire, be sure to keep keys for each door in a designated place).
  3. Placing additional locks on all windows and patio doors.
  4. Using a solid core or metal door for all entrance points.
  5. Using a heavy-duty, four-screw, strike plate with 3-inch screws to penetrate into a wooden door frame.
- Get a dog. You don't need a large attack dog; even a small dog creates a disturbance that burglars would prefer to avoid. Remember to license and vaccinate it and get it spayed or neutered. Also, please collect and dispose of your dog's waste appropriately – it is the law and neighborly.
- Consider having someone care for your dogs in your home while you're away, instead of boarding them.
- If you can afford it, install an alarm system that will alert neighbors of a burglar's presence. Most systems can even summon the police directly.
- Be sure valuables such as guns, electronic devices and artwork are not visible from the street.
- Be sure to lock up ladders and tools which could be used to break into your home.
- While on vacation, have someone pick up your newspapers and mail, so that they do not accumulate and alert burglars of your absence.
- Display your house number conspicuously and have it well illuminated if possible. This will help police and emergency personnel find your home quickly.

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## MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENCES

If you live in multi-family housing, ask that the management and owners take part in the Houston Police Department's Blue Star Program and seek Blue Star certification. If owners and managers have been trained by the Blue Star Program as part of Phase I, ask that the complex begin Phase II – a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) study. Tell management and the owners you want to live in a Blue Star certified property and enjoy the greater safety and security associated with such properties.



[http://www.houstontx.gov/police/multi\\_family/](http://www.houstontx.gov/police/multi_family/)

If an apartment owner or management fails to cooperate and crime is excessively high in your complex, contact the **Multi Family Administrative Unit** of the Houston Police Department at **713-308-3900**. Request that HPD determine if the rate and volume of crime on the property are sufficient to warrant the property being placed on the City's Remedial List. Help HPD force the owners to give you a more secure and safe place to live.

## BUSINESSES



[http://www.houstontx.gov/police/keep\\_houston\\_safe/commercial\\_burglary\\_prevention.htm](http://www.houstontx.gov/police/keep_houston_safe/commercial_burglary_prevention.htm)



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Sometimes, all your efforts won't stop a determined burglar. It's wise to take some precautions that will help you get your property back or in dealing with your insurance company should a criminal successfully break into your home.

### Suggested Precautions

- Make a list of your belongings (be sure to keep receipts, especially for expensive items like stereos and computers). Be sure to update this list periodically.
- Keep copies of your inventory list and receipts in a safe deposit box or with a friend (This is also important in the event of a house fire.)
- Photographing and/or videotaping your possessions is a convenient way to keep a record of what you own.
- Engrave your valuables with an identification or mark to deter burglary and to prove ownership should the article be stolen and later recovered by the police.
- Be sure you have the right coverage. You may need to purchase additional coverage to protect special items like expensive jewelry or rare antiques.

The very best deterrent to burglary and other crimes in our neighborhood is the active participation of our residents. **Please always remember, if you see someone or something suspicious call the POLICE! Our law enforcement officers and deputies would rather respond to a suspicious person call than a burglary, BMV or worse.** Get to know your neighbors and establish "territoriality." This is *our* neighborhood.



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