

FROM THE DESK OF THE POLICE CHIEF

Protecting Your Home When You're Away

By Ryan Thompson, Pine Knoll Shores Police Chief

It is no secret that a lot of our residents are seasonal or second-home owners. The fall and winter, traditionally, is when the Police Department investigates the majority of our property crime cases. Crooks and thieves are like water in that they travel the path of least resistance. The more difficult homeowners makes their property to steal or break into, the more likely the crooks and thieves will be to move on to another target. Here are some easy and cost-effective things homeowners can do to make sure they do not become a target.

1. If you're going to be out of town for an extended period of time, have the post office forward or hold your mail so your mailbox does not pile up with mail. A full mailbox is an indicator for a thief that no one is home. Do not forget to notify newspaper companies as well. A porch or paper box full of newspapers has the same effect.
2. Think about installing motion sensor lighting. It is fairly affordable, and is a great deterrent to unwelcome guests on a property at nighttime.
3. Make sure that all exterior doors have a deadbolt installed.
4. Make sure your blinds or drapes are closed prior to leaving.
5. Take pictures and write down serial numbers and makes/models of valuables prior to leaving. Having this type of information gives us a much better chance of recovering stolen property—and also helps speed up an insurance claim.
6. Do not leave bicycles or kayaks unsecured and visible from the street.
7. Sign up for our Residential Security Check program. Officers and volunteers will check your property throughout the week to ensure doors and windows are secured and no unauthorized access is gained to your property. Stop by the Public Safety Building and fill out an authorization form.
8. If you do not have a residential security system that is remotely monitored, consider doing some research and seeing if one is right for you. There are dozens of companies that offer remote monitoring services, and having an alarm system can give you a discount on your homeowner's insurance. As with anything else, look at a company's reviews from current and previous customers prior to making a commitment.

Quick Safety Tip

If walking or bicycling on a street or highway, remember to walk facing traffic and bicycle with traffic. If walking or bicycling on a highway, it is a good idea to wear reflective clothing or a reflective vest. If you walk with a group, do not walk several abreast when you meet a car. A little courtesy goes a long way toward keeping everyone safe.

Scam of the Month: Automated IRS Phone Scams

In the past several weeks we have received numerous reports from residents who are receiving automated calls claiming to be from the IRS. The voice on the line sounds like a computer or robotic voice, and says that if the recipient does not call the IRS back, a warrant will be issued for his or her arrest. This is just a reminder that the IRS will *never* call and threaten anyone with legal action over the telephone—and the IRS will *never* call and request payment for back taxes. If you receive a call and you are unsure if it is a scam or not, contact the Police Department before making any payments or giving any personal information. Most reputable companies or organizations will not call and ask for payments over the phone or ask for personal information.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE

During August, there were 7 arrests; 22 911 hang-ups; 12 alarm activations; 6 animal calls; 1 larceny; 1 damage to property; 15 disturbances; 32 assist Fire/EMS; 5 motor vehicle collisions; 23 traffic hazards; 119 traffic stops; 27 citations issued (8 speeding, 8 registration/inspection, 4 other traffic violations, 6 narcotics violations, 1 alcohol violation); 17 written warnings issued; 183 business checks; 195 residential checks; and 291 foot patrols in residential areas, parks, beach accesses and businesses. Police personnel participated in 201 training hours, and Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) worked 106.5 hours.

FIRE AND EMS

In August, responders handled 3 fires, 39 rescue and emergency medical service incidents, 1 hazardous condition (no fire) call, 2 service calls, 2 good intent calls, and 11 false alarms or false calls. Personnel participated in 290 training hours.

REMINDER: Lock your doors, especially your vehicles, and don't leave valuables in sight. Report suspicious people or vehicles to dispatch (726-1911) so that the police can be notified. You are not "bothering" the police if you call to report something that doesn't look right. They prefer to assess the situation rather than find out after the fact that you had noticed something and didn't report it. Alert citizens are an asset to the community.

In Memoriam
Kathie Fliss

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ARTICLE DEADLINE

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Fri., Nov. 11	Dec.
Mon., Dec. 12	Jan.
Fri., Jan. 13	Feb.
Mon., Feb 13	Mar.
Wed., Mar. 15	Apr.
Fri., Apr. 14	May

ADVERTISING DEADLINE:

The 19th of the month prior to desired issue

Articles always welcome.