

Crime Fighting and Security Tips

Unfortunately, crime will always be part of society. Criminals of the sort we are dealing with at Westchase tend to be low level thieves. They are small time opportunists looking for an easy score. Once they identify such a location, they may spread the information to their friends. The problem then grows.

We recently spoke to a City of Dallas Police detective. The following are types of things that attract thieves to the area:

Easy Pickings - Cars left unlocked, possessions visible in cars, charger cords and change in consol trays. According to the police, if even a few car owners on site exhibit these non "lock, take and hide' behaviors on site, criminals will flock to the property.

Appearance of Apathy - If there are no signs of active interest in crime prevention (alert/observant residents, dog walkers, warning signs, etc.) in an area, criminals will feel free to enter and steal.

Lack of Security Consciousness - Unused porch lights at night and blinds left open are two clues to criminals that the residents are not taking steps to safeguard their goods. In fact, the detective likened open blinds to 'window shopping' to a thief. If they like what they see when they stroll by, they may just come back when you are not at home and 'shop' your possessions.

In addition to the obvious steps you can take from reading above, he recommended the following:

1. Call 911 every time! Any time you see a suspicious person on site, call and report a '*suspicious person*'. Also, understand that the responding officer will not make you a target by identifying you or coming to your door when he comes to the site. **Also – Do this for better policing:** Tell the 911 operator you want the officer to 'contact you by phone in route'. In this way you can provide much greater detail for the officer to work with - all without exposing yourself to the suspicious character(s).

2. Use *IWatch Dallas*, a smartphone application to report suspicious activity. **This is the future of preventative policing.** (Go to the website for detail. www.iWatchDallas.net) This service is unique. By using this tool you

are helping the police create a database of actual or predicted criminal activity, possible problems and high crime potential areas. With this information, they can create patrol and intervention services to predict and stop crime before it gets out of hand. Use is simple. We encourage you to download the mobile phone app too.

3. Finally, be proactive about your own security. Take the steps mentioned in this notice and be observant. The more potential criminals see residents watching for them, the more likely they will move on to easier targets.