

REDUCE OPPORTUNITY – REDUCE CRIME

Three elements must be present for a crime to occur: **desire, ability, and opportunity**. *Removal of just one of these elements will prevent a crime from occurring.* Since little may arguably be done to address an offender's desire or ability, the focus must therefore be on *reducing or eliminating opportunity*.

Immediately report all suspicious activity to Police. Trust your instincts – if something looks out of place or doesn't appear quite right, call and have it checked by an officer! Never forgo reporting suspicious or concerning activity on the belief that Police have better or more important things to deal with. Additionally, never approach a suspicious person or vehicle on your own.

The below information is intended to assist residents in this effort and has been compiled from recent and historical incidents within the Village.

RESIDENCE

- Always lock doors and windows.
- If available, always make use of a security alarm system. Consider adding one if you haven't.
- Install security cameras capable of detecting and alerting on motion.
- Employ security lighting to illuminate areas of intrusion or vulnerability.
- Do not post current or future absences from home on social media.
- Stop all deliveries to your home to eliminate telltale signs that you are away (i.e. mail and newspapers).
- Utilize the Department's House Watch Program when away for extended periods. Submit requests via the Department's website. (<https://www.vbhp.net/request/house-watch>)



MAIL

- When possible, choose to receive electronic payments versus mailed payments delivered to your unsecured roadside mailbox.
- If you must receive vulnerable items via mail, subscribe to USPS **Informed Delivery** to know when such items are to be delivered.
- **Do not utilize a roadside mailbox to mail outgoing financial instruments.** Be aware that two area Post Offices have had large exterior mailboxes stolen this year. Therefore, if you must mail these items, make certain to deposit them inside the Post Office.

VEHICLES PARKED OUTSIDE

- Keep windows closed and doors locked.
- Always remove all valuables, **especially keys/fobs and garage door opener remotes.**
- Consider that an unlocked vehicle with a functional garage door opener (remote or integrated system) provides offenders with access to your garage and possibly your entire home. Accordingly, leaving keys/fobs inside vehicles within your garage is also discouraged.
- If possible, illuminate vehicles with outdoor lighting.

FRAUD

- Immediately hang up robocalls and **never give your personal information to anyone who has called you.** If you believe there is merit to the call, hang up and re-contact the person/company using a telephone number you have located and not the one provided.
- Watch out for phishing emails and text messages.
- Never allow anyone who has contacted you to have remote access to your computer.
- Be extremely wary of friends/family reporting an emergency and needing money wired or gift cards purchased. Similarly, **financial institutions and reputable companies will never request payment in the form of a gift card.**
- Research charities before making any donations.
- If someone knocks on your door selling goods or services, ask to view their required VBH solicitors permit, which they are required to display while soliciting. Immediately report to PD Dispatch those without a permit.
- When in doubt, **contact the Police Department for a second opinion.**

