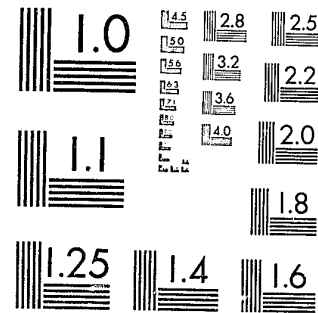


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# Discussion Leader's Guide

## ✓ CRIMES AGAINST OLDER FLORIDIANS

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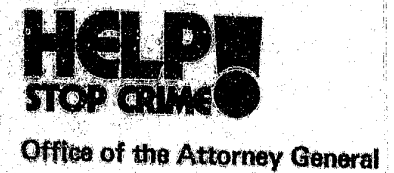
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ACQUISITIONS

DISCUSSION LEADER'S GUIDE

CRIMES AGAINST OLDER FLORIDIANS

HELP STOP CRIME!  
Attorney General's Office

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

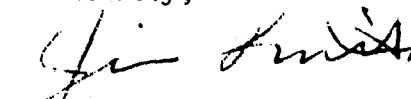
The following is designed to serve as a speaker's aid for crime prevention leaders in educating older citizens regarding security measures they can take to avoid being victimized and to reduce their fear of victimization.

It is our hope that the information contained herein will be supplemented with local problems and solutions as they relate to your individual area.

Additional program materials: booklets, posters, mini slide series, newspaper print ads, radio and TV spots are being developed and will be available to you soon. We urge you to take full advantage of these materials in augmenting your efforts.

I commend your wholehearted dedication to this job and wish you every success in carrying it out.

Sincerely,



Jim Smith  
Attorney General

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

HELP STOP CRIME! owes a debt of gratitude to the many people who helped us draft this Discussion Leader's Guide on crimes against older Floridians. Without their valuable input, the task of putting together this Guide would not have been possible.

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Discussion Leader's Guide  
for  
CRIMES AGAINST OLDER FLORIDIANS

Foreword

The elderly in Florida are not victimized any more than younger people for all crime categories; in fact, they are less victimized by crimes of violence -- rape, murder, armed robbery and assault. But the effect is often far more traumatic for the older Floridian than for the same crime committed against a younger person.

The elderly are, however, victimized at a greater rate than younger people for certain crimes: personal larceny with contact (including pickpocket and purse-snatch), strong arm robbery (mugging) and fraud (consumer fraud as well as con games).

Victimization studies show that in approximate order of frequency, the crimes most often committed against older persons are: burglary, personal larceny with contact, strong arm robbery, assault and fraud. (Not included are vandalism, obscene phone calls and other minor offenses which greatly affect older persons, but which are rarely tabulated.)

There are three obvious reasons why the elderly often suffer far more than younger people:

1. The financial impact of any loss on fixed incomes is more prolonged;
2. Physical injury occurs sometimes and is of longer duration;
3. Psychological effects due to deprivation, invasion, isolation and other factors associated with victimization are extensive, profound and with lasting effect on social behavior.

*Discussion Leader's Note (DLN):*

*In educating older Floridians on the subject of crime prevention, we must remember that their concept of crime might be that of three kids walking through the flower garden in the backyard. We must be careful not to belittle their feelings of futility and helplessness. In addition, we must consider the different classes of older Floridians when making various crime prevention recommendations. For example, consider the consequences of encouraging crime reporting when the individual cannot afford a telephone.*

Statistical Sketch

Older Floridians are an important part of Florida's population -- both in numbers and economic impact. In June 1978, 23% or 2,000,362 were over 60. This is significantly greater than the national average and up from the 20% of 1970. Fifty-eight percent of those over 65 were female. In fact, Florida has the greatest proportion of persons over 60 of any state in the country. (Reference: House Committee on Health and Rehabilitative Services, Aging: A Realistic Commitment, Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Aging, 1979, page 7)

This elderly population is rapidly growing, and is expected to reach an approximate 2.327 million persons by 1980, a 31% increase in five years. By the year 2000, the percentage of the population that is elderly is expected to climb from 21% to 26%. (References: Bureau of Economics and Business Research, Division of Population Studies, University of Florida, "Age, Race and Sex Components by Florida's Population, 1975;" Senate Committee on Health and Rehabilitative Services, The Elderly In Florida, A Legislative Study, 1976, page 13; and House Committee on Health and Rehabilitative Services, Aging: A Realistic Commitment, A Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Aging, 1979, page 7)

Florida's elderly population is concentrated in thirteen counties with more than 1,500,000 persons over the age of 60, forming five population centers in four coastal areas and one central area:

1. Dade, Broward and Palm Beach
2. Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota and Lee
3. Duval
4. Volusia
5. Polk and Orange (Central)

Dade County has the highest number of elderly 301,914, comprising 21% of the state's total elderly population. (Reference: House Committee on Health and Rehabilitative Services, Aging: A Realistic Commitment, A Report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Aging, 1979, page 7)

Only 2.3% of persons age 60 and over live in middle housing. In 1970, 58% of older Floridians lived in single unit structures as opposed to condominium/apartments. (Some individual counties may vary, e.g., Palm Beach: 67% in condominiums, 20% single family residences).



In December, 1978, approximately 1.3 million citizens over 60 were receiving social security benefits. These social security recipients earned \$315 million dollars per month. Permanent residents over 60 years of age contribute over 3.0 billion annually to Florida's economy through social security and supplemental security benefits.

DISCUSSION LEADER'S INTRODUCTION

We're here to talk to you about fear. All of us have experienced fear since childhood; for example, the fear of sleeping with the lights out. Perhaps, one of the greatest fears in your mind now is being the victim of a crime. Some of this fear is justified -- some is not.

We know that some of you have been so scared that you refuse to allow service personnel to enter your home, or that you sleep during the daytime in order to be alert at night. We know that many of you are too afraid to go shopping, use public transit or walk alone.

*A 1974, survey conducted by Louis Harris and Associates revealed that 23% of all respondents over 65 years of age listed fear of crime as being their most serious problem. Their next greatest concerns were "health" (21%) and "not having enough money to live on" (15%) followed up be "loneliness," "not enough friends," "not enough job opportunities," "poor housing" and "not enough clothing."*

*A 1975, study by the National Council on Aging reported that crime on the streets was the number one fear of people over 65. One study (Schooler, 1970) found that the elderly are more concerned with personal safety than with social interaction.*

Let's discuss the crimes you should be concerned about -- how they occur, and how they might be prevented.

HELP STOP CRIME! wants to help you regain some of the freedom you have had throughout your life in order that you may live the full life you desire and deserve -- now! You and your neighbors have a tremendous amount of wisdom, ability and power -- senior power. Florida does not want to lose any of this tremendous resource.

You are most likely to be a victim of the following crimes:

FRAUD -- bunco, consumer mail fraud;

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY -- breaking and entering, larceny;

LARCENY -- bicycle and fire extinguisher thefts;

HARRASSMENT/INTIMIDATION -- obscene phone calls, harrassing phone calls, vandalism, street intimidation.

#### FRAUD

##### Pigeon Drop

This bunco scheme is flourishing in every major city across the country. They seem preposterous, but con men are professional actors, and confidence persons are usually experienced in winning your trust.

A stranger "finds" a wallet or envelope full of money. The stranger offers to share the money with you and perhaps with another con artist posing as a bystander. He or she may call a "boss" or supposed attorney and then suggest that you take money out of your bank to show "good faith" or prove that you could repay the money if its true owner claimed it. They will promise to do the same.

What would you do?

We would want you to either 1) advise your bank teller that suspicious persons have asked you to make a withdrawal, 2) call the police, or 3) refuse to participate.

Do not participate in such plans that require you to produce cash to show good faith or financial responsibility. While examining your money, these con artists will cleverly switch it with worthless paper. Another scheme designed to get you to produce cash for the switch involves an offer to give you a large sum of money for distribution to charity. Don't fall for any of these con games. The "money" you get will be worthless and your money will be gone. If the offer seems too good to be true, it probably is!

*Discussion Leader's Note: (DLN)*

*The speaker may want to develop some phony money as a prop to use when covering the above fraud. Speaker can point out how anyone can be impressed with a large sum of money; however, the easy "picking" should alert you as you may be bargaining not only with your life's savings, but the security of your life itself.*

Penalties:

*The above is classified as CRIMINAL FRAUD and is covered under Florida Statutes (F.S.) 812.021, (technically a larceny statute). Depending on the amount of money involved or the value of the property taken, the offender would either be guilty of a third degree felony punishable with no more than five years in prison OR a second degree misdemeanor with no more than 60 days in jail for each violation. These maximums apply*

only to first time offenders. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S. 775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)

#### Bank Examiner

You receive a phone call. The caller states he or she is a bank official. You're told they are checking on a dishonest bank employee and they ask your help. You are instructed to go to the bank and withdraw a specified amount of money. The caller says he will send a bonded messenger or detective by your home to pick up the money and redeposit it to test the dishonest employee. You are then requested to keep the conversation a secret.

What should you do?

Call the police as soon as he hangs up. This is a common swindle. The bank examiner is a fake. No bank operates this way. If you withdraw money and give it to someone who flashes his badge at the door, the receipt you get will be worthless and your money will be long gone. The police should always be called in when you are asked to participate in such a plan.

Remember....

- \* Con men play on our greed, successfully manipulating victims until their sense of greed overcomes common sense and good judgement.
- \* Be suspicious when they require secrecy, haste and cash.

#### Penalties:

The above is classified as CRIMINAL FRAUD and is covered under Florida Statutes (F.S.) 812.021. Depending on the amount of money

*involved or the value of the property taken, the offender would either be guilty of a third degree felony punishable with no more than five years in prison OR a second degree misdemeanor with no more than 60 days in jail for each violation. These maximums apply only to first time offenders. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S. 775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

#### CONSUMER FRAUD

(Medical frauds, false advertising, fraudulent business deals, mail fraud, fear sales, home improvement frauds, etc.)

##### A. Home Improvement Fraud

You are working in your yard and a person drives up in a new pickup truck. The driver claims to have just completed a large job down the street and has excess materials. This fraud artist may offer to spray your roof, coat your driveway or fertilize your lawn for an unbelievably low price ... and also "guarantee" the materials.

What would you do?

You should request a written estimate, tell him you want to compare the price and note the driver's description and that of the truck. Call the police.

Reputable businesses will give a written estimate and usually do not make such calls. Chances are this person's roof coating is no more than whitewash; the

driveway coating -- motor oil, the fertilizer (peat moss) sawdust and oil. With no written estimate to fall back on, these con artists often end up making their victims pay a much higher price. Don't be ruled into a "bargain."

Penalties:

*This type of fraud can be prosecuted under both CIVIL and CRIMINAL statutes. It is covered by F.S.501, Part II, which allows damages and attorney's fees.*

*Under criminal law it is covered by F.S.812.021 as either a misdemeanor of the second degree or a felony of the third degree. It can also be prosecuted under criminal 817.44, a second degree misdemeanor. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

B. Mail Fraud

1. Fake contest

The fake contest starts with the exciting news that you have won something. In reality there is no contest. It is a come-on to get you involved in a transaction in which you are going to be parted from your money -- for no return.

Penalties:

*Civil F.S.501, Part II, allows damages and attorney's fees. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

2. Work at home

The victim is usually the woman who seeks additional income by working at home. If the newspaper ad or flyer proposes that you can earn

money by working at home by sewing, knitting or doing some other task and asks for a small "registration" fee and a sample of your work to demonstrate your skill - beware! One such offer drew 2,000 inquiries. No one qualified and the money was not returned.

#### Other swindles?

Mail order frauds may appeal to you because you are unemployed and eager to earn money at home. Your quick response is understandable. But stop! Check it out!

#### Penalties:

*This type of fraud can be prosecuted under both civil and criminal statutes. Civil is covered by F.S.501, Part II, which allows damages and attorney's fees.*

*Under criminal law it is covered by F.S.812.021 as either a misdemeanor of the second degree or a felony of the third degree. It can also be prosecuted under criminal 817.44, as a second degree misdemeanor.*

*Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

#### C. Bait and Switch

Here again we have a legitimate sales technique that becomes illegal. If someone advertises merchandise or a service at a ridiculously low price to get you into the store or place of business, that is the "bait." If you

get there and the bargains do not exist or are all mysteriously sold, and you are steered to a higher priced item, often an unknown brand, that is the "switch."

Penalties:

*Prosecution may occur under civil law: either 817.41 or F.S.501, Part II -- both allow damages and attorney's fees. Or it may be prosecuted under criminal F.S.817.44 -- misdemeanor of the second degree. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

D. Medical Fraud

These can be downright dangerous because while you are fooling around with some bogus treatment or cure, your health may be worsening for lack of legitimate medical care.

"Fake laboratory tests" are always being offered, somewhere. If you are susceptible, you lose 10, 15, 20 or more dollars and get an absolutely worthless report on whether or not you have cancer, arthritis or bladder trouble.

Miracle cures often publicized in newspapers and magazines are not worth reading. You can hardly expect to find medical miracles in the back pages of a magazine. If you bite, the quackery is usually consummated by mail.



Penalties:

Medical Fraud may be prosecuted under CIVIL F.S.501, Part II -- allows damages and attorney's fees or civil 817.44 -- allows damages and attorney's fees. It may also be prosecuted under CRIMINAL 812.021 -- second degree misdemeanor or third degree felony and under F.S.458.15 as a felony. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)

E. Mail Order Clinic

This fraud starts with a direct mail solicitation to your residence offering free medical diagnosis or some other bait. You get trapped into expensive and useless treatments. Legitimate doctors, clinics and hospitals do not advertise through the mail as to their services.

Penalties:

Mail order clinic may be prosecuted under CIVIL F.S.5012, Part II -- allows damages and attorney's fees or CIVIL 817.41 -- allows damages and attorney's fees. It may also be prosecuted under CRIMINAL 812.021 -- second degree misdemeanor or third degree felony and F.S. 458.15 as a felony. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S. 775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)

F. Fear Sell

Beware of the city inspector, complete with phony credentials. Don't let him past your doormat. Call your city inspection office to check

his credentials - while he waits outside the door. There are very few city inspectors who do this kind of thing. If you get taken in, he'll inspect whatever it is that he is inspecting, find it completely unsafe, order it shut down (water, furnace, etc.) and then come up with the name of a plumber, electrician, or other expert friend who just happens to be able to respond to your emergency. After it is over, you have had nothing done, you've been charged an exorbitant amount, and you've probably been talked into a fat maintenance contract to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Penalties:

*This may be prosecuted under CIVIL F.S.501, Part II, or CRIMINAL F.S. 812.021 -- a misdemeanor of the second degree or a felony of the third degree. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

*If having a need to review Florida Statute 501, Part II, reference should also be made to Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 2.*

*If you are feeling pressed for time, our Ad Hoc Committee advised that a priority be given to the bank examiner, pigeon drop, home improvement and medical frauds.*

What should you do?

Fraud is the most easily prevented criminal offense. This is because you make this crime possible. It is up to you whether or not the crime is committed. Healthy suspicion, consumer awareness, a little bit of common sense and a telephone call to the proper agency should practically eliminate the crime.

We can understand that you do not want to admit that you have been a victim of fraud. Your pride has been replaced with embarrassment. You have said to yourself, "I should have known better." That's what makes us so beautiful -- we're human. But remember, reporting this information may help prevent someone else from being a victim. So please report the incident or any suspicion of the attempt.

*Discussion Leader's Note: (DLN:)*

*The Attorney General's HELP STOP CRIME! program recommends that on a statewide level you call the Consumer Services Division of the Department of Agriculture on their toll-free hotline (1-800-342-2176) or the Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Division in Tallahassee (904)488-8916 and in Miami (305)279-8700.*

*On the local level, call your local police agency for proper handling and referral. It is up to the Discussion Leader to determine what other known forms of consumer assistance offices exist in the local county. You could plug that local information here.*

There are a variety of legal services available to you -- naturally they vary from community to community. You may want to keep in mind the following: Legal Services, Incorporated; Volunteer Lawyers in some large Senior Centers; and the Legal Aid Society.

G. Insurance Fraud (Jewelry Appraisal)

In this scheme, the "agent" contacts the intended victim with phony credentials indicating that he or she is an insurance underwriter's agent and that you need your jewelry appraised due to inflation. He or she urges you to give them your jewelry. They give you a receipt for your valuables and leave. They will either 1) never be seen again, or 2) replace your good jewelry with junk if they return.

Penalties:

*Insurance fraud is covered under CRIMINAL F.S. 812.021 -- second degree misdemeanor or third degree felony. Additional fines may also be imposed (F.S.775.083) payable to the state and refunds may be ordered payable to the victim. (Federal law may also be applicable.)*

#### WHAT IS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?

This is simply a program of neighbors watching other neighbors' property during a vacation period, the working day, evenings, or during any absence. This program is also helpful when a neighbor is home, but unsuspecting of any trespasser or prowler.

It is important to note that officers who regularly patrol neighborhoods may be called away from your neighborhood because of an emergency. Also, patrolmen may not recognize a stranger in your yard ... but your neighbors will.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Neighborhood Watch Program works through mutual aid ... neighbors watching the property of other neighbors. This has several advantages, including the fact that neighbors know who you are, what type of car you drive and when you will be away ... your neighbors may be the first to notice a burglary at your window or door ... or a strange car in your driveway.

#### HOW TO DEVELOP THE PROGRAM

The Neighborhood Watch Program can be developed by holding a block meeting to discuss ways to work together to protect the neighborhood.

Remember, each neighbor can only effectively watch homes to each side, the front and back. For the program to be totally effective, each resident must take an active role in both security improvement and observation.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS?

Write down the description of the suspicious person(s). Get the make, model, color, and license number of strange vehicles. Call the police department immediately. Even if the suspicion proves groundless, it is better to be safe than sorry.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING TO THE POLICE

1. Identify yourself -- name, address, phone number (this is preferable, but not mandatory)
2. Type of crime (burglary, assault, suspicious person or vehicle, etc).
3. Crime "in progress" or "Has occurred"
4. Where? Be as specific as possible
5. Description of suspect, whether armed, how many
6. Description of vehicle, tag number
7. Direction of travel

The more information you can give the police the better. Try not to get impatient - since in most instances a unit is being dispatched while you are talking.

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION REPORTING

In reporting the description of a suspicious vehicle to the police, try to supply the following information:

1. Color
  - a. model: vinyl top, convertible

2. Size: large, medium or small
3. Identifying marks
  - a. tag number - entire number (or first 3 characters is helpful)
  - b. dents, broken glass
4. Direction of travel

#### TERMINOLOGY WHEN REPORTING CRIMES

- \* Burglary -- breaking and entering a house or other structure
- \* Robbery -- (armed) the taking of some item(s) while a person is being threatened with a weapon (gun, knife, club, etc.)
- \* Larceny -- theft of property without forced entry
- \* Assault -- an intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do violence to a person, coupled with an apparent ability to do so
- \* Assault and Battery -- physical assault of a person without the use of a weapon

If you come home to find you have been burglarized, do not enter your house or apartment. Immediately find a phone and call the police. Wait at a neighbor's home until police arrive.

If you hear or suspect a burglar is in your home while you are there, avoid a confrontation. Care should be taken not to let the burglar know he is detected. It may be better to lie quietly, watch as best you can what the burglar touches and wait until he is making an exit ... then call the police. After calling the police, advise the police that the burglar has left the house and in what

direction (North, South, back, front, etc.). Remember, burglars are usually nervous and may be frightened into committing bodily harm to you if detected.

If someone comes to the door asking to use the phone for an emergency, offer to make the call for them - but don't let them in your house. If the person persists, leave the door locked, excuse yourself, call the police and be explicit in your call as always when reporting an incident.

Movies have frequently portrayed the captured criminal as someone who comes back to haunt the citizen who reported on the criminal. The fact is, however, that retaliation seldom occurs.

At one time or another many of you have failed to call the police for various reasons. Perhaps some of you felt the police would be ineffective - - - or that the incident was not a police matter. Some may not have wanted to get involved and some of you may have feared revenge. Remember, police do not generally solve crimes on one phone call -- it takes many citizens calling in and giving information that collectively assists the police in solving a crime. In addition, police want you to call even though you may feel the incident is insignificant. When you decide not to get involved you allow that fear which you have to spread and grow. Innocently, you aid the burglar or criminal. Many of you think that the police alone should be able to prevent crime. That's wrong. Crime in your neighborhood will not diminish until you take the wisdom of your years and demonstrate your senior power.

If you receive a call asking for someone who does not live in your household, if you get a wrong number call and particularly if you are contacted by someone asking questions about the inside of the house, assume that you are being considered for a burglary or home robbery and see to it that you are not home



alone for the rest of the day, if possible.

If you practice crime prevention, there are times when you will feel guilty. We would all like to be friendly and open our homes to everyone. You will feel bad about making someone stay outside when they say that they need to use your phone; however, by practicing these recommendations you will gain a little more peace of mind. There are still ways to help that person and at the same time play it safe. Remember, it is your right not to let a person in your home.

#### CLOSING YOUR DOORS TO BURGLARY

##### Hinge Doors:

The most common door type used in homes and apartments is the hinge door. It is important that all exterior doors be of solid wood core construction or that metal clad doors be used. Hollow core or composition board doors are not effective deterrents because they can be easily battered or bored. It is defeating the purpose of a good deadbolt lock to mount it on a hollow or foam core door.

Lock all doors even when gone momentarily -- down the street, to the store, visiting neighbors, doing laundry, etc.

If door hinges are exposed on the exterior of the door, nonremovable hinge pins should be used. To prevent removal of a door that has removable hinge pins, you can employ a headless screw or nail. Drill two holes opposite each other in the center of both leaves of the hinge. Insert headless screw or nail into the leaf on the door frame side. Allow screw or nail to protrude half an inch. When the door is closed, the screw will engage the other hinge leaf.

A solid wood core front door should have a wide angle viewer (180°) installed in it for easy viewing of visitors without opening the door. It is inexpensive and easy to install. Do not rely on a chain latch. It is not a security device.

#### Sliding Glass Doors:

Sliding glass doors are particularly easy targets for the burglar and are frequent points of entry. The manufacturers' locks can usually be quickly pried open. The doors can also be easily removed from their tracks unless they are properly secured.

To prevent removal of doors, install 1¼" pan head (large head) sheet metal screws in upper track at both ends and the middle so the frame just clears the head of the screws. To secure a door in position, you can also drill a hole at a downward angle in the overlapping frames of the door at the top center. Then insert a steel pin or a heavy nail.

There are different types of sliding glass door auxiliary locks that can be used but key operated locks usually offer the best security - especially those using a deadbolt or pin mechanism. To prevent opening of the door, a metal bar that attaches to the side frame and fits across the middle of the sliding door, running parallel to the floor, can be used.

An open invitation to the neighborhood burglar is the fact that many of you prefer to sleep during the night with your sliding glass doors open -- either for preference or for economy reasons. To avoid unwanted entry, you may want to consider using a small floor or window fan instead. We recommend that you keep your sliding glass doors locked with the auxiliary locks we discussed earlier.

Double Doors:

The inactive door can be adequately secured by installing cane bolts, ½" diameter by 12" long, on both the top and bottom of the door.

Jalousie Doors:

Jalousie doors are a poor security risk because a burglar can easily gain entry through them. The best solution is to replace them with solid wood core doors. If this is not feasible, the door can be covered on the inside with heavy gauge expanded metal mesh, through-bolted to the door with carriage bolts.

Lock all doors when working in the yard or garage.

SECURING YOUR WINDOWS

Double Hung Windows:

The latches on many double hung windows can be easily jimmied or pried open. However, this type of window can be simply and inexpensively made secure!

-- The window can be pinned by drilling a hole at a slight downward angle through the first sash and into but not through the second sash. The window can then be pinned with a strong nail. Additional holes may be drilled for pinning the windows in a slightly open position for ventilation.

-- Several types of keyed locks which offer effective protection are available for double hung windows. They are inexpensive and easy to install. But remember to master key all window locks for convenience and train

children in their use. The thumb turn locks in the center of most double hung windows offer very little security.

-- A wooden stick can be securely wedged between the top and bottom portions of the window. The stick can be secured to the inside of the window frame with pieces of hook and loop velcro material. In this way, the stick can be shortened to allow for window ventilation.

Also, remember, have a plan for getting out of your window in case of fire.

#### Awning Type Windows

Awning type windows are difficult to secure. The removal of the inside operator handle adds some security, but the handle should be kept handy in case of emergency. Awning windows should be tightly closed to enhance security.

#### Jalousie Windows

Jalousie windows are a very high security risk and should be replaced if at all possible. They can be secured by installing metal grating on the inside of the window area with a quick release feature in the event of fire. But at a comparable cost to installing grating, the windows can be replaced with another type window which offers better security.

#### FIRE EXTINGUISHER THEFTS

Many of you living in condominiums have had the annoyance of having your fire extinguishers stolen.

The bulk of this loss is caused by juvenile vandals who steal the extinguishers, expel contents on building, vehicles and car windows, and then discard the empty cylinders. When police or citizens find the discarded cylinders there is presently no way to determine who they belong to, resulting in a loss of several thousand dollars annually throughout your county.

We strongly recommend that you mark your fire extinguishers with identification numbers.

*Under Florida State Statute 633.171, the theft  
or rendering of this fire extinguisher inoperative  
is punishable by up to 60 days in jail and/or a  
\$500 fine.*

For those of you concerned about fire prevention, the multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher is recommended. Fire prevention authorities recommend one in the kitchen, preferably near the door, and one in the bedroom by the bed. Don't buy from a door-to-door salesman.

A word of caution -- after using a fire extinguisher, you should go to another part of the house to avoid respiratory problems that could be caused by the released chemicals.

COMMON SENSE PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID SEXUAL ASSAULT

- Every female -- regardless of age, race or economic status -- is a potential victim of sexual assault. Rapists don't discriminate...so be alert at home and away from home.
  
- Rapists usually select as victims females who appear alone and vulnerable. When out, look alert and walk with a purpose. If living alone, give the impression your aren't...use last name and first initial only on mailbox and phone listings.
  
- Use solid wood core exterior doors...and install a 180-degree peephole in the front door...and quality deadbolt locks on all doors. Chain latches offer no security at all! Learn to distinguish between privacy devices and security devices.
  
- Never open your door to strangers...check their identity through your peephole viewer.
  
- Check identifications of all repair and delivery men before opening your door...and don't give out personal information about yourself or your neighbors. Lock doors at all times!

## STREET CRIMES

(Purse snatches, assaults, pickpockets, strong arm robberies)

A purse snatcher doesn't usually give you any warning. The criminal quickly grabs your purse, leaving you no opportunity to cooperate with him!

You are shocked, and by reflex, you resist.

Don't!

Granted your resisting is natural, but that behavior could mean the difference between your safety and serious injury.

If you must carry a purse with you, put very important valuables elsewhere -- on your person. Never carry any more in your purse than what you need for shopping. Never carry anything that can't be replaced should an attack occur. And if it does, let the purse go. Don't fight for it!

Yes, I know -- it was a great bargain! But good bargains will return. The criminal won't. So get a good description. Think now, "If someone grabs this purse, I'm going to let them have it, I'm not going to fight to keep it." When attacked by a purse snatcher drop to the ground - rather than be knocked down - and stay down until the threat is over.

SPECIAL CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

- Never carry valuable papers -- obtain a safety deposit box
- Try to avoid banks and grocery stores the first of the month
- Remember, there is safety in numbers -- travel in pairs or more
- Have your Social Security check deposited in your bank by mail.  
The Social Security Administration will do this for you
- Women should consider sewing a secret pocket in their clothing  
for carrying valuables
- Use lighted bus stops, if you can
- Never assume that a man who attacks you in a robbery is alone.  
Many use standby accomplices who will assist if needed
- Do not carry weapons to ward off robbery unless you are absolutely  
certain that you are willing and know how to use them. The same  
advice applies with keeping a weapon in the house for security pur-  
poses
- Never "flash" money, no matter how respectable the place. One  
mugger reported that he had a working arrangement with a waiter  
who would give information in the alley about customers at restaurants  
with large sums of cash



-- Always pay attention to any suspicious appearing person who passes more than once, or who tends to follow a person to the opposite side of the street. Some muggers stalk victims on the opposite side of the street or by shifting position from the rear to the front in order to gain time while staying in range. They are thus able to pick the most advantageous spot for the attack.

-- Analyzing the crime statistics from one Florida city, it was determined that most purse snatches occur on downtown sidewalks and in parking areas. Pickpockets show no distinct pattern. However, 35% of these attacks occur on sidewalks in commercial areas and in other locations such as bars, restaurants and food stores.

-- You should not resist an assailant. Do not try to stop an offender by either physical action, verbal argument or pleading. Don't do any of these. The offender is usually not going to do grievous bodily harm to you. Try to remain as cool as possible, gaining as much description as possible, direction, etc.

#### OBSCENE PHONE CALLS

When you receive an obscene phone call, don't agitate the caller and don't react on the phone. Just hang up and note the date and time of the call. Then call the police or sheriff's department and make a formal complaint. If a second call is received, again don't react. Note the time and date of the call.

An obscene phone call is a criminal violation. A wire tap can be placed on the line for the purpose of tracking down the offender and will also assist the victim in prosecution.

Remember the following definitions:

- a. obscene - sexual in nature
- b. threatening - to do bodily harm
- c. harrassing - sales promotions, kids, etc.

**END**