Holiday Safety

During the holiday season, many of us love to shop; however, in doing so it can sometimes present unique dangers. Taking a few preventive measures can more likely help this holiday season be joyous. The holiday season is a time when many of us as busy people can become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crimes. The following crime prevention steps can help you be more careful, prepared, and aware of your surroundings during this holiday season.

- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member.
- Dress casually and comfortably; avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Do not carry a purse or wallet; if possible, however, always carry your driver license or an identification card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.
- Even though you are in a hurry and thinking about a thousand different things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash if possible.
- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- Keep cash in your front pocket. Keeping it in a back pocket could lead to you becoming a victim of a pickpocket.
- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen, or misused.
- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home. This can be extremely important when reporting a lost, stolen, or misused credit card.
- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, bus stops, on buses.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.

Protecting Your Automatic Teller Machine Card (ATM)

- Keep your ATM card in a safe place and protect it just like you would cash, credit cards or checks.
- Do not leave it around where others can see your card, at home or at work. If your card is missing or stolen notify your bank immediately.
- Never write down your Personal Identification Number (PIN) anywhere, especially on your ATM card or on a note in your wallet. Keep your PIN number secret from everyone.
- If you receive a call supposedly from your bank or possibly the police wanting to verify your PIN, do not give that information. Notify the police immediately that you received such a call.
- Never give any information about your ATM card or PIN over the telephone.
Holidays can also present potentially dangerous situations for children. Here are some simple preventive measures that can help keep your children safe during the holiday season.

- If possible, leave small children at home with a family member or trusted babysitter.
- Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case you get separated from the child in the store.

**Teach children to stay close to you at all times while**

- shopping. Not wondering off or playing in isles that you may or may not see them.
- Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom. Many children crimes happen inside restrooms in short a period of time.
- Children should never be allowed to a parked vehicle alone and they should never be left alone in the car.
- Teach children their full name, address, and telephone number to give to police officers or mall security.
- Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.

**Report all suspicious activity - DIAL 911 or 856.423.1100**

- If you witness a crime in progress
- If what you see causes you to believe a crime has just taken place
- If you believe a crime is about to take place
- If you witness an accident with injuries
- Remember your help is always needed as extra eyes and ears for the police department
- DIAL (856) 423-1100 in any non-emergency situation.

- REMEMBER - don’t ever confront a subject to determine what he/she is doing. Call the police for immediate help.

- Paulsboro Police Department Tip Line – 856.423.6222