

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, November 29, 2013

TAKE STEPS TO KEEP YOUR VALUABLES SAFE WHEN PARKING IN POPULAR NIGHTSPOTS, SHOPPING AREAS

One of the most common types of theft is theft of valuables from your automobile. Theft from auto is strictly a crime of opportunity that can be prevented if you take away the opportunity. Thieves generally won't waste their time breaking into autos that don't have valuables in plain sight.

Thefts from autos can be a recurring problem in the District because of the prevalence of fashionable stores, popular restaurants, and trendy bars. Visitors to these establishments can become the unwitting target of these crimes of opportunity. Cars parked near sporting venues when games or concerts are scheduled may also be targeted. If you plan on parking your car in a neighborhood that is known for its numerous visitors, remember thieves know these areas are popular, too. Be sure to either take valuable property with you or secure it properly. Please take the precautions listed below to help ensure your auto is not targeted by thieves:

- **Keep Your Valuables Out of Sight.** The best way to prevent theft from your auto is to always keep valuables out of sight. Never leave cell phones, briefcases, suitcases, or electronic devices (smart phones, tablets, GPS, etc.) in your car in plain view. Take these items with you, or secure them—all the time, every time.
- **Secure Your GPS Device.** While many GPS devices are mounted in the dashboard of the vehicle, the MPD encourages anyone who uses a portable GPS device to take it with you, along with any other items of value, when you park the car.
- **Use Your Trunk.** If your car has a trunk, use it. Put valuables in there or in a locked glove compartment. Hiding items under seats is better than leaving them in plain view, but securing them inside the glove compartment or trunk is a far better deterrent.
- **Don't Tempt Thieves with New Purchases.** Any time you're shopping, place packages in the trunk, not on the passenger seats or floors.
- **Lock It Up.** Also, keep your car doors and windows locked—all the time!

Remember: "Outta sight, outta mind"—if thieves can't see your valuables, they're less likely to waste their time targeting your auto. Take the time to secure your valuables; it makes a difference.

OCTO OFFERS TIPS ON PROTECTING YOUR INFORMATION ON CYBER MONDAY AND THROUGHOUT THE ONLINE SHOPPING SEASON

Online holiday shopping continues to grow in popularity. According to American Express, for the first time, more people are expected to shop online on Cyber Monday than visit brick and mortar stores on Black Friday. Shoppers are expected to spend nearly \$62 billion online throughout the holiday season this year, up more than 15% from 2012. The use of mobile devices for online shopping (m-commerce) is projected to reach almost \$10 billion for the 2013 holiday season, as more consumers are using these devices to compare prices, research products, locate stores, and make purchases to a larger degree than ever before.

Whether you'll be conducting transactions from your desktop, laptop or mobile device, keep

» See these tips and more online at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/autotheft>

» Take precautions when pumping gas. Learn steps you can take in a brief video on our YouTube channel at:
<http://youtu.be/H4r2v3MhU-s>

» Download a brochure on "Protecting Your Vehicle from Theft and Tampering" at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/protectingyourvehicle_pdf

these tips in mind to help protect yourself from identity theft and other malicious activity on Cyber Monday, and throughout the year:

- **Secure your computer and mobile devices.** Be sure your computer and mobile devices are current with all operating system and application software updates. Anti-virus and anti-spyware software should be installed, running, and receiving automatic updates.
- **Ensure you use a strong password and unique password,** which is not used for any other accounts. Set a timeout that requires authentication after a period of inactivity.
- **Use mobile applications with caution.** As devices such as smartphones and tablets, continue to gain popularity for online shopping, so too will the volume of attacks against them.
- **Know your online merchants.** Limit online shopping to merchants you know and trust. Only go to sites by directly typing the URL in the address bar.
- **Consider using an online payment system or credit card.** Where available, you may want to use online payment services, which keep your credit card information stored on a secure server, and then let you make purchases online without revealing your credit card details to retailers.
- **Look for “https” before you click “Purchase.”** Before you submit your online transaction, make sure that the webpage address begins with “https.” The “s” stands for secure, and indicates that communication with the webpage is encrypted.
- **Do not respond to pop-ups.** When a window pops up promising you cash, bargains, or gift cards in exchange for your response to a survey or other questions, close it by pressing Control + F4 on Windows devices, or Command + W for Macs.
- Do not use public computers or public wireless access for your online shopping.
- **Secure your home Wi-Fi.** Encryption settings should be enabled and strong - using WPA2 is recommended.
- **Be alert for potential charity donation scams.** To check if an organization is eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions, visit the IRS website.
- **Use caution when opening email attachments.** Refer to the Using Caution with Email Attachments Cyber Security Tip for more information on safely handling email attachments.
- **Holiday Season Phishing Scams and Malware Campaigns.** As the winter holidays approach, users need to stay aware of seasonal scams and cyber campaigns, which may include:
 - o electronic greeting cards that may contain malware
 - o requests for charitable contributions that may be phishing scams and may originate from illegitimate sources claiming to be charities
 - o screensavers or other forms of media that may contain malware
 - o credit card applications that may be phishing scams or identity theft attempts
 - o online shopping advertisements that may be phishing scams or identity theft attempts from bogus retailers
 - o shipping notifications that may be phishing scams or may contain malware

- » For additional information about safe online shopping, please visit the following sites:
 - o US-CERT: <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST07-001.html>
 - o OnGuard Online: <http://www.onguardonline.gov/articles/0020-shopping-online>
 - o Microsoft: <http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/online-shopping.aspx>
 - o Privacy Rights Clearinghouse: <http://www.privacyrights.org/Privacy-When-You-Shop>
 - o Internet Crime Complaint Center: <http://www.ic3.gov/media/2010/101118.aspx>
 - o Internal Revenue Service: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check>
- » Please visit the following link for additional information about Phishing Scams and Malware Campaigns:
<http://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/current-activity/2013/11/19/Holiday-Season-Phishing-Scams-and-Malware-Campaigns>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Remembering Homicide Victims on 12/7. MPD's Victim Services Branch, in collaboration with other community service

providers, will host the Sixth Annual Tree of Remembrance event on December 7, 2013, from 11am-5pm at 101 M Street, SW (First District Community Room). This Holiday Remembrance Event is dedicated to honoring the lives of loved ones lost in the District of Columbia. For more call Dawn Christie (202)

727-7139 or Carla Okonkwo (202) 645-6363. **Join the MPD Reserve Corps.** The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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