

## How to Mark Your Items

Using your invisible ink pen, mark your items in a place where the mark is least likely to be handled often. Although the ink in the invisible pen is water and rub resistant, avoid placing the marks in an area where your fingers will regularly come in contact with the writing. If this is unavoidable, re-marking occasionally may be required.

## What to Write

For each item you will mark, write your last name and your driver's license number. Include the two-character abbreviation for your state (DC, MD, VA, etc.) before writing the number. Most states now use a unique number (i.e., Soundex), rather than the individual's Social Security Number. If your license still uses your SSN, it is highly recommended that you request a new ID with a unique number other than your SSN and use that number to mark your items. If you don't drive, request a non-driver's identification, which uses a unique identifying number.

## Where to Mark Your Items

For personal electronics, mark the items in an inconspicuous location on the back side of the device. Our officers are trained to look for the marks on the bottom right corner of the device first. If your phone or MP3 device has a cover or bumper, it's a good idea to write the mark where the cover will protect it against wear.

For other electronic equipment such as televisions, video recorders, and other devices, mark the item on the bottom of the device or, if possible, near the power input on the back panel.

For tools and other equipment, mark the item at the base or near the power cord.

No matter what the item, be as consistent as possible in where you mark similar items.

## Record Where You've Marked the Device

When you create your list of valuables, it's a good idea to also write down where on the item you have marked it. This way, if your property is recovered, you can help law enforcement quickly confirm your rightful ownership.

Periodically check using the UV light to make sure that the marks are still legible. Re-apply the identifying information if necessary.

## Get Involved!

No one individual or agency working alone can prevent crime. It takes police and citizens working in partnership. The District of Columbia's community policing strategy provides many ways for police and communities to work together to prevent crime and build safer neighborhoods. These include regular Police Service Area meetings in your community, citizen patrols and more. To learn more about community policing activities in your neighborhood, call your local police district:

1st District	Main:.....(202) 698-0555 .....	TTY: 727-8506
	Substation:.....(202) 698-0068 .....	TTY: 543-2352
2nd District	Main:.....(202) 715-7300 .....	TTY: 364-3961
3rd District	Main:.....(202) 673-6815 .....	TTY: 518-0008
4th District	Main:.....(202) 715-7400 .....	TTY: 722-1791
	Substation:.....(202) 576-8222 .....	TTY: 576-9640
5th District	Main:.....(202) 698-0150 .....	TTY: 727-5437
6th District	Main:.....(202) 698-0880 .....	TTY: 398-5397
	Substation:.....(202) 698-2088 .....	TTY: 281-3945
7th District	Main:.....(202) 698-1500 .....	TTY: 889-3574

## Know Something About a Crime? Don't Keep It a Secret

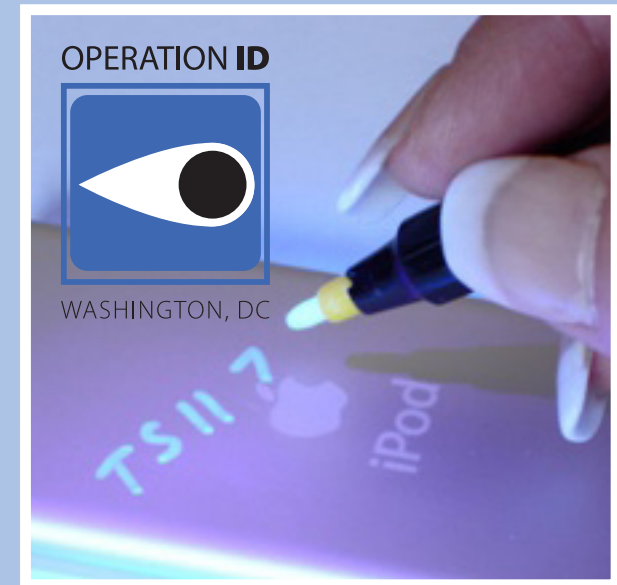
If you have important information to share with the police, the Anonymous Crime Tip Line and Text Tip Line enables you to give MPD vital information anonymously. Just dial (202) 727-9099 or text to 50411 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Your name will not be used, only the information you provide. Your information could lead to a cash reward. For more details, see [www.mpdc.dc.gov/tipline](http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/tipline).



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Metropolitan Police Department  
300 Indiana Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

January 2011

## FOR YOUR SAFETY



# Marking Your Property with Operation ID

*Suggestions for Marking Your Personal Property to Help Deter Theft and Aid in Its Recovery*



# Help police recover your property if it's ever stolen.

By marking your valuables, you'll make it easier for law enforcement to trace and return your property in the event of a burglary or robbery.

Operation ID is a free, easy way to mark your high-value electronics, tools, computer equipment, small appliances, and other items that are quick and easy targets for thieves looking to turn a quick profit. And by displaying the Operation ID symbol in your window, you can deter would-be burglars from making your home a stop on their route.

## About the Program

Operation ID is a proven way to help deter property theft and recover valuable items taken during a burglary. By marking what's yours with an invisible ink, you'll make it easier for police to return your property should you become the victim of burglary, street robbery, or snatching.

Nationally, since 1963, the program has been proven successful in deterring would-be burglars from targeting homes that display the Operation ID decal. It's also helped police agencies across the country in returning stolen goods to their rightful owners, rather than helping line the pockets of criminals.

## What You Can Do

### Mark Your Property

Using a free ultraviolet marking pen provided by the Metropolitan Police Department, homeowners mark their possessions with their last name and driver's license number\* so that the property is identified without being visible to thieves. Because marked property is difficult to dispose of, marking it can discourage burglars and thieves from trying to pawn it or sell it to others.

Unlike traditional engraving techniques which can be obscured and rendered ineffective, invisible ink makes it nearly impossible for thieves to detect and remove. The pen can mark on nearly any surface and the ink is water and rub resistant. See package instructions for details.

In addition to marking your items, it's a good idea to create an inventory of your valuables, including the make, model,

\*If you don't have a driver's license, use a nondriver's ID or other identifier — never put your Social Security Number on your property.

color, serial number, and location where you've marked the item for your major electronics, equipment, and other valuables (see the list of suggestions below). A Valuable Property Record form is available at your police district station or from our website ([www.mpd.cdc.gov/operationid](http://www.mpd.cdc.gov/operationid)). Be sure to keep the list in a safe place.

### Display the Placard

After you've marked your items and made a list of your property, display the Operation ID placard on doors and windows that could be used for entry. By advertising your participation in Operation ID, you are announcing that your valuable property has been marked and will be difficult for a burglar to sell. The placard is available for download from [www.mpd.cdc.gov/operationid](http://www.mpd.cdc.gov/operationid).



## Mark These Possessions

- » Answering machines
- » Bicycles
- » Binoculars
- » Camcorders
- » Car audio systems
- » Computers and peripherals (monitors, printers, CD writers, etc.)
- » DVD/BluRay players and DVRs
- » Satellite TV receivers
- » Fishing rods, reels
- » Golf clubs
- » Guns
- » Jewelry
- » Kitchen appliances
- » Lawn mowers
- » Mag wheels and wheel covers
- » Portable microwaves and other small appliances
- » MP3 players
- » Musical instruments
- » Outboard motors
- » Radios
- » Stereo equipment and amplifiers
- » Tape recorders
- » Telephones
- » Tools (hand and power)
- » Televisions and TV set-top boxes
- » Vacuum cleaners



## Record Your Property

For your most important and valuable possessions, it's also a good idea to photograph or videotape them and create a written description of the item as you would if you were insuring it. Note any unique identifying marks (such as scratches, dents, stains, etc.) that could help in recovering the item. Include something else in the photo to help indicate the item's size.

## Get More Safety Tips

For tips on other ways to stay safe from crime in your daily life, see the other brochures in this series, available from our Website at [www.mpd.cdc.gov/safety](http://www.mpd.cdc.gov/safety). Or visit your local police district. To find the one nearest you, visit [www.mpd.cdc.gov/districts](http://www.mpd.cdc.gov/districts).