

Safety reminders – Holiday season

Staying safe while shopping

- Leave children at home if possible, with a trusted babysitter.
- Make sure your child knows their full name, address, telephone number, and knows to immediately go to mall security or a police officer if separated from you.
- Never allow children to go alone to the restroom or the car.
- Park as close to your location as possible and make sure to note where you are parked. If at night, find a place that is well lit.
- Secure your vehicle. Lock all doors and windows.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks, or cars with tinted windows.
- Don't leave packages or valuables in your vehicle. If you must leave something in your car, place it in the trunk or out of sight.
- Never leave your vehicle unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.
- When leaving a location, find your keys before going to your car.
- Maintain a secure hold on your parcels, purse, and handbag. Do not place these items on top of your vehicle to open the door.
- Look for suspicious people and do not approach your vehicle alone if you see something that doesn't look right.
- Don't be afraid to ask the mall or store security staff for an escort before you leave your shopping location.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It's essential to be able to have clear visibility and freedom of motion.
- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. A thief may use a variety of methods to distract you to take your money or belongings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Dress casually and avoid wearing expensive items and jewelry.
- Pay with credit cards or checks if possible.

Staying safe at the ATM

- If you must use an ATM, pick one that's in a well-lit location and only withdraw the amount of cash you need. Avoid ATMs located in isolated areas.
- Shield your PIN and be aware of anyone standing near you.
- Don't throw away or leave your receipt at the ATM location.
- If at a drive-up ATM, be mindful of the cars in front and behind you. If possible, wait until the car in front of you leaves so you don't get pinned in.
- Keep track of your ATM withdrawals, credit card receipts, and all purchase transaction records.

Staying safe at home

- Holidays are a prime time of year for scam calls. Be extra cautious when someone calls you asking for donations or personal information.
- Keep your doors and windows locked and secure. It only takes a minute for someone to crawl through an open window.
- If going out of town, make sure your neighbors know you will be away and have them keep an eye on your house (picking up the newspaper or mail).
- Large displays of holiday gifts should not be visible from windows or doors.
- Make sure doors and windows are clear when setting up holiday decorations.
- If setting up a Christmas tree, make sure to provide a sturdy base and ample water or wet sand to keep it from drying out.
- Frayed or damaged wiring on holiday lighting is a severe fire threat. Make sure to check for damaged cords.
- Never leave candles or a fire (even in the fireplace) unattended.