

# Scouting Program



## Protecting Your Home

Discuss with your youth members ways they can keep their home and family safe using the following steps.

### Securing your home and vehicle

We each have a role to play when it comes to making our homes, workplaces and neighbourhoods safer. There are number of things you can do to help keep your home and property secure.

#### Lock up

- Lock all windows and doors, even when you're at home – unlocked side and rear doors and windows are the most common entry points for burglars.
- Install good quality locks on external doors and windows – remember to disengage deadlocks when you are inside to allow easy escape in the event of a fire.
- Consider additional security measures such as security screen doors, sensor lights, a monitored alarm system and overt CCTV.
- Never hide keys on your property or in your vehicle – consider leaving with a family member or trusted neighbour.
- Keep garages, sheds and similar storage facilities locked.

#### Other safety tips

- Get to know your neighbours – they may recognise unusual activity when you're out.
- Bring in your bins and collect mail regularly so your home looks lived in – ask a neighbour to bring your bin in or collect your mail if you are away for a while.
- Make sure your house is visible from the street so passersby and neighbours can detect any suspicious activity.
- Cut overhanging branches and trim shrubs back from your house to make it harder for burglars to hide.
- Place packaging from newly purchased expensive items in the recycling bin – leaving boxes on the nature strip lets burglars know what you have inside.
- Consider having a dog.
- Check the details of any salesperson or workman that comes to your door and report any suspicious activity to your local police.
- Consider a safe for storing valuables.

- Backup computer hard drives.
- Engrave or mark your property to make it harder to sell and easier to return if located – the letter V followed by your Victorian licence number is recommended.
- Photograph valuables and record details on a property inventory form.
- Join your local Neighbourhood Watch and Eyewatch Facebook page and be an active part of crime prevention in your community.

### Preventing motor vehicle theft

Opportunistic thieves often break into unlocked or vacant homes to steal cars. Stolen vehicles may be used to commit further offences and be damaged, destroyed or never recovered.

Most car thefts occur in or around private residences, so it is important to take steps to protect your car:

- Lock all car doors and windows, even when parking at home or just leaving your car for a moment.
- Keep all keys, including spares, in a secure place – never leave keys in your car.
- Keep your car locked while driving
- Park your car in a locked garage if possible – or park in your driveway or a well-lit area if they are preferred alternatives.
- Install an engine immobiliser and car alarm if they are not already fitted.
- Consider using a steering wheel lock – particularly for older vehicles.
- Consider installing a bonnet lock.
- Install a GPS tracking device in your vehicle.
- Do not put your name and address on any keys – use a mobile phone number instead.

### Bicycles, Motorcycles and Scooters

- Park in a locked garage.
- Use parking infrastructure or anchorage points where available.
- Secure the handles with a steering lock.
- Use a manual locking device such as an alarmed disc lock, D lock or chain and padlock.

- Ensure your bicycle, motorcycle or scooter is identifiable. Engrave the letter 'V' (for Victoria) followed by your driver's licence number on the frame
- Get insurance; bicycles, motorcycles and scooters can often be insured against theft and damage through your home and/or contents insurance policy. Ask your insurance company for details,

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## Reporting crime

### In the event of a burglary

It is important to report crime at the earliest opportunity to ensure police are given the best opportunity to locate offenders, recover stolen property and keep everyone safe. If you are a victim of burglary:

- Call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 and make a report.
- If the incident is currently in progress or has just occurred, where offenders may still be at your home or in the area, find a safe place and call Triple Zero (000).

Remember, the safety of yourself and others is more important than trying to prevent a burglary.

If your car has been stolen also remember to notify your insurance company immediately.

### Suspicious activity

- Call Triple Zero (000) immediately to report any suspicious activity in your neighbourhood.
- Call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 to make an anonymous report.

### Absence from residence

You can be absent from your residence for a number of reasons. During off-peak periods, police often see holiday homes and unoccupied properties become the target of burglaries. It is important to be proactive about keeping your residence and community safe, especially if you are going away for an extended period of time.

- Consider a house-sitter to look after your home while you're away.
- Cancel any newspaper subscriptions.
- Ask a neighbour to occasionally park their car in your driveway.
- Turn down the volume on your telephone.
- Set a timer for a radio to turn on and off throughout the day.
- Be careful when posting holiday plans on social media.

You can also register your absence of residence with Victoria Police. This information is useful to police and could be used to contact you and/or your emergency contact in case of an incident at your residence. This information could also prompt local police to check your residence during routine patrols, however due to the dynamic nature of calls for police services this service cannot be guaranteed.

If using this service, be sure to notify police when you return, especially if returning earlier than planned.

Register your absence from residence [here](#).

### Lost property

To report lost property, call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 or submit an online report

You need to provide sufficient detail to identify your property, including:

- Unique or distinguishing features, colours and/or markings.
- Make, model, brand.
- Serial/ID numbers.
- The circumstances how the items were lost.

Items such as keys, wallets, purses or handbags may be reported if the item has a high and/or sentimental value and is identifiable. For example, modern electronic keyless entry remotes are coded to match your car's computer and anti-theft immobiliser and often are of a high value to replace.