



Southwest Precinct Public Safety Newsletter

December 22, 2008

Dear Community Friends,

Holiday Safety Tips

If You're Traveling...

- ❑ Set an automatic timer for your lights.
- ❑ Do not place packages or gifts near windows or other high-visibility sites.
- ❑ Ask your trusted neighbors to watch your home while you are gone and park their vehicle in your driveway from time to time.
- ❑ Do not drink and drive. When attending holiday celebrations, consider designating a driver or using a cab.

If You're Shopping...

- ❑ If you take your children shopping, teach them to get help from police officer, store security/clerk if they get separated or lost.
- ❑ Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put your wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- ❑ Only use ATMs in safe, secure locations and do not keep your PIN on your person.
- ❑ Avoid carrying large amount of cash. Use credit cards or checks and carry your Drivers License or ID card with you.
- ❑ Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. Criminals may try to distract and confuse you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.
- ❑ Do not leave anything of value in plain view in your car. Packages and shopping bags should be hidden out of sight. Do not just cover them with a coat or blanket.
- ❑ Park in a lighted area and lock your vehicle doors.
- ❑ Always check the back seat of your vehicle before entering.
- ❑ Be aware of your surroundings when unlocking your vehicle.

If a Stranger Comes to the Door...

- ❑ Stay alert to suspicious-looking couriers delivering packages to you or your neighbor's home.
- ❑ Many con artists take advantage of holiday generosity by going door-to-door.
- ❑ Never open the door to strangers.
- ❑ If you want to make a donation to a worthy cause, then do your own research where 100% of your donation goes to the charity.

- ❑ Post a "No Solicitor" sign on your door.
- ❑ If someone still knocks at your door, then tell them through the door to read your sign and that you are not interested.

Preventing Banking Fraud

Stay safe from Phishing: Easy clues to help you keep your personal information secure.

The main goal of a phishing email is to get you to a site where you will provide your personal information. With these basic, but powerful clues, you can easily recognize the threat and ensure the safety of your identity and finances.

- ❑ The Bank will not ask you to verify your personal information in response to an email.
- ❑ Most phish emails convey a sense of urgency by threatening discontinued service or information loss if you don't take immediate action.
- ❑ Many phish emails have misspellings, bad grammar, or poor punctuation.
- ❑ Deceptive links in phishing emails look like they are to a valid site, but deliver you to a fraudulent one.
- ❑ Many phish emails use generic salutations and generic information (e.g. "Dear Customer" or "Dear Account Holder") instead of your name.
- ❑ Many phish emails come from an email address not from the company represented in the email.
- ❑ If you suspect an email to be phishing, do not click on any links in the email. Delete it and look up the phone number and call.

Police Blotter, <http://spdblitter.seattle.gov/>

Subscribe to SPD: Crime Blotter

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/SeattlePoliceSouthwestPrecinct>

Police Blotter, Megan Sheppard, West Seattle Herald

<http://www.westseattleherald.com/news/police%20blotter/>

This web page is update every week on Tuesday.

West Seattle Blog, Tracy Record, Editor

http://westseattleblog.com/blog/?page_id=4988

This web page is update multi-times a week.

Seattle Police Department main web page

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/>

Southwest Precinct Web-page

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/Precincts/Southwest/default.htm>

Seattle Police Crime Statistics

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/crime/stats.htm>

For More Information Call: **Benjamin Kinlow**, Crime Prevention Coordinator, (206) 684-7724 or email benjamin.kinlow@seattle.gov. Check out www.seattle.gov/police/precincts/southwest/prevention.htm

Dear Community Friends;

Freezing Weather, Snow

We want to pass on some tips on increasing your safety during cold winter weather. Freezing temperatures often results in broken pipes, flooding and damage to private property. They also mean hazardous road conditions, possible downed trees and power lines, and power outages. Freezing weather, ice and snow may be with us for a while, so here are some tips that can help prevent costly damage to our homes - and keep our streets safer:

Winter Safety Tips

- Shut off outside faucets, drain the water and protect them by insulating them with rags or foam covers. Pipes in unheated areas (attics, basements and garages) should be wrapped insulating materials, available at local hardware stores. Drain and remove all outdoor hoses, and shut off and drain in-ground sprinkler systems.
- Once the temperature drops below freezing, protect indoor sink pipes that are against exterior walls, by opening under-sink cabinet doors, allowing heat to circulate.
- During severe cold, allow the faucet farthest from your front door to slowly drip cold water. Set your thermostat no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit, day or night (24/7).
- Do not leave water running in unoccupied buildings.
- Please do not use hair dryers to thaw frozen pipes!
- Know the location of the main water shut-off valve *inside* your home and/or at the street main shut on the meter and how to use it. If you need to shut-off the water from the main in the street to your home, ensure you have the proper tool. Contact Seattle Public Utilities at (206) 386-1800.
- If a water pipe breaks, immediately close the main shut-off valve to stop excessive flooding. If you cannot turn off the main shut-off valve, Seattle Public Utilities customers can call (206) 386-1800 and a crew will turn off the water at the meter for a standard service charge.
- Help keep street drains clear by removing snow and other debris — if it can be done safely. As the snow melts, blockages in the gutters or drains will hinder runoff, increase the risk of flooding.

- If the street drain cannot be cleared, or if the cause of the blockage or flooding is uncertain, call Seattle Public Utilities at (206) 386-1800.
- Heavy rain after heavy snowfall can increase the chance of landslides due to soil saturation that reduces slope stability. Trees may be more prone to fall in high winds when the ground is saturated. If a landslide damages your property and you have an immediate concern for your safety, leave the premises and call 9-1-1.
- Seattle property owners with structures affected by or endangered by a landslide may contact the Department of Planning and Development at (206) 684-7899, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., for a rapid evaluation of damage. A comprehensive assessment, which will need to be completed later by a private structural or geotechnical engineer.
- Please exercise caution when going out doors during a storm. Downed power lines, objects in the road and fallen trees are not easy to spot at night.
- Treat all power lines as an electrical hazard until rendered safe by your electrical utility. In Seattle, contact Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light at (206) 684-3000 to report power outages and/or downed power lines.
- Exercise caution when driving and walking! Cold temperatures often mean “black ice,” which is treacherous for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Be careful when engaging hills and inclines. When driving, give yourself plenty of distance between you and the car in front of you. Take it slow and easy. If you do not need to go out, stay off the road until road conditions improve.
- ***Do not use gas generators or charcoal heaters indoors.*** The potential for carbon monoxide poisoning is high. In previous years, use of these devices indoors for heating and power generation resulted in injuries and fatalities.

Personal Preparedness

For more information about emergency preparedness, contact the Public Education Section of the Seattle Office of Emergency Management at 206-233-7123. Also visit their website at www.seattle.gov/emergency. Other emergency preparedness resources include www.seattleredcross.org, www.ready.gov, and www.govlink.org/3days3ways/index.htm