



EAST BRUNSWICK POLICE DEPARTMENT

“STREET SMART” NEWSLETTER

TOPIC: **Distraction Burglaries**

August 4, 2017

What is a distraction burglary?

Burglars are always finding new tricks and methods when it comes to burglarizing a home. One of the newest and trendiest is the “distraction” burglary. In other words this is a con game. A distraction burglary is when a “visitor” comes to your home, tells you some lie to swindle their way into your home, or creates a ruse to distract the victim so an accomplice can slip in, which is the most common method. The most frequent target for these distraction burglaries are the elderly and vulnerable. The average age of a victim of a distraction burglary is 81 years-old.

Police report that with spring here in bloom, more and more of these crimes will occur. A distraction burglary involves witty manipulation, and if you don't know the signs, you may fall victim to this type of crime, even if you have burglar alarm in place. Here is some information and tips to help you be aware of someone attempting a distraction burglary.

How it works

The whole point of this operation is to distract you enough that it draws you out of your home, while an accomplice that's unseen by the homeowner sneaks in the back door, or the front depending on the “con.”

For example, the distraction burglar will pose as a roofer, tree trimmer, city worker, or even as an employee of a utility company. Some have even gone as far as posing as someone in distress, such pregnant female having car trouble. Then the “utility worker” distracts the homeowner by walking them outside the residence to show them the “problem,” such as curb that needs painting or future work that needs to be done.

So while the owner is distracted by the “utility worker,” a second accomplice, which is never seen by the homeowner, enters the unlocked home and steals cash, jewelry, or any electronics he/she can get their hands on.

Recommended Tips

- If you're not sure who the person is behind your door, don't open it!
- If the “con” is so convincing, call a neighbor or friend nearby to come along and check the perimeter of your home, or check on the visitor before opening your door.
- If you are successfully lured outside of your home, make sure to lock the door behind you. Most importantly, make sure all entryways leading into your home are locked as well. This includes doors, windows, and the garage.
- If you're unsure about the nature of one's visit, **DON'T OPEN THE DOOR!**

Remember, this is your home and you need to protect yourself from all the dangers out there. Always be sure to request identification from anyone including individuals posing as township employee. Solicitors must be registered with the Township of East Brunswick and have proper documentation in hand which includes an ID card with a photograph. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and demand answers. Distraction burglars rely on you being trusting, nice and not the kind of person to offend someone. The distraction burglary can bring an overwhelming result. Victims can lose their peace of mind and confidence, not to mention valuables and possessions. Be wary every time you open the door, and most importantly, be safe!

Have you seen anything or anyone suspicious?

If you do see a suspicious person or action, in your community call the police via our non-emergency number at 732-390-6900, or call 911 if the situation requires emergency response. Do not hang up.

Give an identifying description of the suspicious person or vehicle, such as:

Age / Sex / Race

Height & Weight

Hair / Facial hair

Clothing

Auto make, model, color, license plate number

Direction of travel

Activity

For additional information visit www.ebpd.net or contact Community Policing

by phone at **732-390-6938** or email at CommunityPolicing@ebpd.net.