

# Press Release



## Senior Crime Prevention

**Apache Junction, Arizona November 13, 2014** – People over the age of 55 make up almost a third of the population of Apache Junction. Seniors are enjoying longer, healthier lives, and by the year 2016, this number will increase to almost half the population being over 55 (<http://www.citydemographics.us/apachejunction>). At the AJPD we often receive calls from 55+ communities and neighborhoods with concerns regarding specific crimes in their areas or asking to give presentations on crime prevention techniques. The truth is, seniors are victims of crime less often than younger people, but the effect of crime on seniors is often more severe.

Three general rules to senior crime prevention are:

- **STAY ALERT!** Be tuned-in to your surroundings; don't be taken by surprise. Be aware and prepared, even in your own neighborhood.
- **STAND TALL!** Walk confidently, don't show fear, and don't look like a victim.
- **TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!** If you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, leave right away and get help if necessary.

These rules will help you develop a "crime prevention" attitude. Also, the following are some specific crime prevention tips that may apply in your lives. These crime prevention tips are meant to protect you, your possessions and your income.

### AT HOME

- Never open the door to strangers; always insist on proper identification.
- If someone comes to your door with an emergency (for example, a traffic accident or an injury), **DON'T LET HIM OR HER IN!** Call 9-1-1 for them!

### SECURE YOUR HOME

- Use deadbolt locks on all exterior doors. Always keep your doors locked. Have a peephole in the door so you can see a caller without opening it.
- Don't rely on security chains; a determined assailant can easily break them.
- Protect windows and other points of entry with good locks or other security devices (such as a length of wooden doweling placed in a track to prevent a window or sliding glass door from opening). Mark and record your personal property.
- When you go out, make your home sound and appear occupied by using an automatic timer to turn on interior lights and a radio. Keep the outside premises well lit at night.
- Do not leave your key under the mat or in a flowerpot. Use outdoor lighting, shrubbery and fencing to help secure your home.

- Consider electronic surveillance systems, alarm systems and/or a dog to enhance your home security. Consult with your Area Senior Lead Officer for personalized home security tips.

#### **IN YOUR CAR**

- Know where you are going and how to get there;
- Maintain your vehicle in good working order, with ample gasoline;
- Plan your trip and take friends along;
- When possible, travel during daylight hours;
- Don't enter dark parking lots or deserted garages;
- Leave only your ignition key with parking attendant;
- Let someone know where you are going and your planned return time;
- When driving, lock your doors and windows; lockup when you leave;
- If you suspect someone is following you, drive to the nearest public place; and
- Never pick up hitchhikers.

#### **IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF A CRIME**

- Don't resist;
- Never pursue your attacker;
- Call the police. Dial 9-1-1 in case of an emergency; and
- **REPORT CRIME!** You may have money returned and prevent further theft from yourself and others!

**Have a "crime prevention minded" attitude and let your intuition be your guide. Be alert, be safe and enjoy life.**

The senior crime prevention information included in this article was compiled from materials obtained from the Department of Aging, California Crime Prevention Officers Association (CCPOA), and the City of Apache Junction Economic & Business Development department.

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