

# A Few Simple Ways to Discourage Break-ins

- Leaving certain things lying around your yard or in plain sight from the road can unwittingly lure thieves onto your property like frantic bargain hunters to a flea market. First, if you have a bicycle that someone could easily walk away with, put it in your garage. Also, after purchasing a new plasma screen television or other pricey electronics, don't leave the box out beside the trash can or recycling bin because you are advertising that you have something new and valuable inside that could fetch decent dollars on the street. It may also leave them wondering what other goodies are inside your home.
- If burglars can tell that someone is home, there's a greater chance that they won't attempt to break in. Remember, more break-ins occur during the day when many people are at work. For that reason, when you leave the house, create an illusion that someone's still there. You can leave a light on, along with music or your television for good measure. Of course, if you're going to be burning up that electricity by not turning off lights when you leave, make sure you've installed compact florescent bulbs and put them on a timer. Outdoor lighting is key to keeping burglars out of your yard. They don't like working in well lit areas.



Putting a home security system sign in your yard won't guarantee they won't test out whether it's valid, but it could deter them. According to the Office of Community Oriented Police Service, most residential thieves stay away from houses with such signs. If you do have an alarm, remember to set it.

- You can easily break into some older sliding doors by simply popping them off of their frame, even when locked. It's harder to do that with newer ones, but you should still take extra precaution to secure them since they can be an inviting entry for burglars. Simply take a strong dowel, steel bar or two-by-four and slide it into the back groove. That way, even if people can pick the lock, the rod stops the door from sliding back and opening.
- Also remember to check window air conditioning units. If you can jimmy the window up from the outside, add a stopper to that frame.
- Don't leave your garage door open for the opportunist to see what you have.

- Don't leave a spare key out in an obvious spot. Burglars know where to look so don't make it easy.
- It may seem like a good idea to leave a spare key hidden under a flower pot or doormat in case you get locked out of your house. But that's an open invitation for a burglar to walk inside without any difficulty. Someone could also see you retrieve the key at some point, giving away your hiding place.
- You may want to give a spare key to a trusted neighbor or friend who lives nearby for safekeeping. Since most people now own cell phones, if you lock yourself out you can call for help or walk over to the person's house. You could also put the spare into a combination lockbox and hide that somewhere outside.
- Remember to never put any identifying information on your house keys. If you lose them, and someone else finds them, it would be fairly easy to trace them back to your home and break in.
- **Secure Your Yard**



- Tall bushes around your house make perfect hiding places for thieves. Tall shrubs and overgrown trees are welcome hiding places for criminals to wait until the coast is clear to get into your house. That doesn't mean you need to cut down every plant in your yard. Just keep things manicured.
- Low shrubs in front of windows remove additional covering for thieves if they attempt to break in through one. Cut away any tall tree branches that reach upper story windows and protect against attacks from above. Regularly trimming larger bushes and tree branches also eliminates dark shadows that help hide intruders.
- This type of security measure is referred to as **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**. CPTD strategies aim to prevent crime by creating an outdoor environment that makes it difficult to pull off. Its four tenets are:
  - Natural surveillance -- keep entryways to your home visible to prevent people from being able to sneak up.
  - Territorial reinforcement -- using landscaping and design to define your territorial space.
  - Natural Access Control -- adding hindrances to easily access your
  - Police can help you stop crime before it happens, rather than just responding to it. For instance, if you're leaving town for a while, let the police know and request that they drive by your property to check on things.

- Many police stations also offer free security evaluations for your property. You can contact Crime Prevention Officer, Shelly Taylor (719-553-2418) to set up an appointment.
- Take advantage of community policing programs where officers make a greater effort to build relationships with the residences. The police in your area practice this so get to know the officers who patrol your neighborhood. Successful community policing has been linked to lowered crime and healthier neighborhoods and could lower the chances of break-ins.
- Residential crime spikes during July and August as people set off on summer vacation. As mentioned earlier, if you are going out of town for an extended period of time, call your local police and let them know. Also, alert neighbors you trust about your trip and ask that they keep an eye on your property during that time.
- More importantly, when you leave town, don't leave signs of an empty house. That will only make your house look like a giant bulls-eye to a thief. First, if you have a home phone, don't change your message to alert callers that you have left town. Also avoid having piled up mail, overgrown lawns and newspapers strewn about your yard that send surefire signals you're miles away.
- Have a friend house sit or at least pick up your mail and newspapers. Ask them to move your car periodically to make it look like you're still around. During the winter if you live in a cold weather climate, consider having someone shovel snow from your driveway. In the summers, arrange for someone to cut your lawn.
- Know Your Neighbors



- Neighborhood Watch groups have a proven track record for lowering crime.
- Getting to know the people who live in your neighborhood is one of the most important safety steps you can take. Closer-knit neighborhoods generally report fewer break-ins because strangers will stick out, and people are more likely to keep a casual eye on other people's security. Neighborhood Watch Programs, started in the 1960s, can be very effective at lowering and preventing crime. According to the National Crime Prevention Council, more than 30 million people in the United States have joined these groups. Contact Officer Shelly Taylor @ 719-553-2418 today to start your neighborhood watch.
- Studies have consistently found that watch programs effectively reduce crime and violence in neighborhoods.
- If you rent a house or apartment, you have more incentive to get to know your community because renters are 85 percent more likely to experience a break-in. This may

be because renters aren't as likely to watch out for one another or have any sort of community watch program.

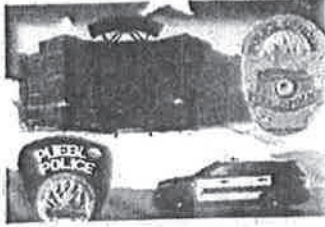
- Stay Vigilant!
- Although it's nice to know you have people watching out for you in your neighborhood, you also need to watch out for yourself. If you aren't paying attention to what you're doing, you could unknowingly be rolling out a red carpet for a burglar to waltz through your front door.
- While it may seem like a symptom of paranoia, keep your identity and any travel plans on the down low. For instance, only put your street address on your mailbox. Give away your last name, and someone could find your phone number, work place and a host of other stats with a few mouse clicks. Before you jet off to Bermuda, don't talk about it openly in public because a sinister stranger could be taking note. Don't put the information out on social media until you get back.
- Educate yourself as well about crime in the area. Check the crime in your area by using the Pueblo Police Department's P2C site <http://police.pueblo.us/p2c> to see an online crime map that will show you precisely where reported incidents occurred around you. If you notice a lot of criminal activity, that's your signal to pay extra attention to security. And always keep an eye out for suspicious activity in neighborhood. A little added effort can go a long way to protect your home and your safety.
- Lock it Up



Locking windows and doors is the most important thing you can do to stop a break-in.

- As mentioned earlier, more than 40 percent of break-ins happen without the use of force. That means a lot of people are leaving their houses without locking the doors and windows. If you have a thumb latch lock and a deadbolt on your doors, always lock the dead bolt. Double-check weaker doors such as patio and sliding ones to make sure their locks are strong enough to withstand kicks. When you leave your home, don't forget to lock up the door leading from the garage to inside. Even if your garage door is down, someone can easily open it.
- You may need to change your locks to stronger ones to keep out would-be burglars.





## Community Services Division



### Captain

Kenny Rider  
(719) 553-2594

### Sergeant

Eric A. Gonzales  
(719) 553-2582

### Crime Prevention Officer

Shelly Taylor  
(719) 553-2418

### Social Media Information

Citizens can obtain information through three social media locations as follows:

1. **FACEBOOK** - Pueblo Police Department
2. **Twitter** - @PuebloPolice1
3. **pueblo.us** [Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Departments](#) > Police Department

You can also get notifications via E-mail or text on anything the Police Department posts by doing the following:

1. Go to pueblo.us
2. Click "NOTIFY ME" located top center of page.
3. Enter your E-mail address and click "Sign in".
4. Enter a cell phone number if you'd also like to receive text notifications.
5. Scroll down to NEWS FLASH and locate "Police Department"
6. Click E-mail icon or phone icon. (or both)
7. Scroll down to BLOG and find "PPD Public Blog".
8. Click E-mail icon or phone icon. (or both)
9. Scroll down to CALENDAR and select "Police".
10. Click E-mail icon or phone icon. (or both)

Press releases and community safety information is sent out regularly. By signing up for notifications, you can keep up with what the Police Department is currently involved in as well as future events and schedules.

Pueblo Police Department  
200 S. Main St.  
Pueblo, CO 81003

Public request for Crime statistics for specific location or neighborhood

1) Go to <http://www.police.pueblo.us/p2c>

2) Click: Search for Events

3) Click: I Agree

4) Specify a Date range (ex: this month)

5) Type in the Street Number (ex: 200)

6) Type in the Street Name (ex: South Main St)

**OR** scroll down to neighborhood of interest

7) Must specify search range (ex: 1 mile)

8) Click Search

**\*\*\*\*\* If the person does not have access to a computer, we have 3 in the police lobby available for this specific purpose- this is the only website that these computers connect to**

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# RECORD OF BELONGINGS



Form compliments of the Pueblo Police Department

Item: _____
Make/Model: _____ Value: _____
Caliber/Size: _____ Color: _____
Serial #: _____
Photo Taken?    YES    NO
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Note: Serial numbers are a crucial part of being able to identify your personal belongings and aid law enforcement in prosecuting criminals. Photos also help identify your belongings and help with insurance claims as well.