

- If you ever have car problems, be especially wary of strangers who offer help. Stay in the car and ask them to call a service truck or police.

### **Don't Be Flim-Flammed By A Con Artist!**

Con artists prey on older people who worry about insurance, investments, and maintaining their safe homes. Regardless of how nice and polite someone may seem, be suspicious of any proposal that:

- sounds too good to be true,
- has to be kept secret,
- or requires immediate cash.

Call the Better Business Bureau or the police to report suspicious activity.

### **Be Especially Wary Of:**

- "Get rich quick" opportunities or schemes for which you have to put up good-faith money.
- Bargains on home repairs or improvements by Scam Artists.
- Investments that promise unusually high returns for your up front money.
- Someone claiming you owe money for an item ordered by a deceased relative at some time in the past.
- Work-at-home schemes, door-to-door sales, telephone sales, supplemental health insurance, miracle cures, glasses and hearing aids at bargain prices from unknown sources, and unfamiliar charities.

### **Let's look at some facts:**

- Compared to other age groups, people 65 and over have the lowest rates for most types of crime, with a few exceptions such as purse snatching.
- We all greatly fear violent crimes. But, statistically, these are the ones that happen least often.
- Most assaults are not committed by strangers. Rather, by relatives or friends of the victim.

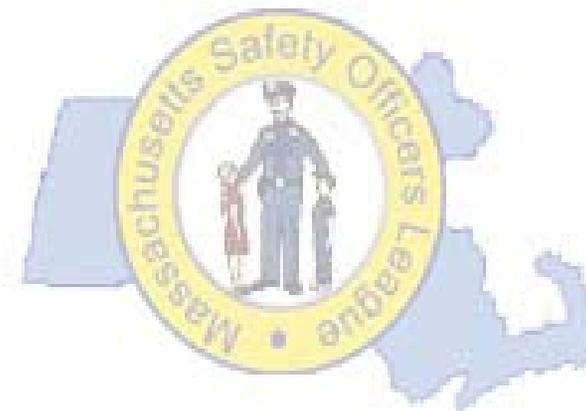
Statistics aside, when older people are victimized—even by a minor crime—the effects can be physically, emotionally and financially devastating. Report all crime, no matter how minor or even embarrassing, to the police by calling 911. They can link you up with victim service agencies, the district attorney's office, and other agencies whose staff is there to help you. If you are the victim of a crime, help is just a phone call away.

Here are more web sites to check for further information on these topics.

- [www.masafetyofficers.org](http://www.masafetyofficers.org)
- [www.ncpc.org/training/...trainings/seniors-and-crime-prevention.ppt](http://www.ncpc.org/training/...trainings/seniors-and-crime-prevention.ppt)
- [www.ncpc.org/.../keeping-the-elderly-safe-in-the-21st-century.ppt](http://www.ncpc.org/.../keeping-the-elderly-safe-in-the-21st-century.ppt)
- [www.mass.gov/?...Prevention...Senior+Citizens%2C...](http://www.mass.gov/?...Prevention...Senior+Citizens%2C...)
- [www.justice.gov/usao/ma/lecc.html](http://www.justice.gov/usao/ma/lecc.html)
- [www.gerryleone.com/category/in-the-news/http://www.marthacoakley.com/about/Issues/details/23](http://www.gerryleone.com/category/in-the-news/http://www.marthacoakley.com/about/Issues/details/23)
- [http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2/008/04/attorney\\_general\\_martha\\_coakle.html](http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2/008/04/attorney_general_martha_coakle.html)



# **SENIOR CITIZEN SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION**



**MSOL Website**

[www.masafetyofficers.org](http://www.masafetyofficers.org)

**MSOL Membership Application Website**

<http://masafetyofficers.org/membership.htm>

Crime Prevention is everybody's Business! It's not just a job for the police. Common-sense measures like locking a door, joining a Neighborhood Watch or going to the bank with a friend, can help prevent crime. Many older men and women greatly fear becoming a victim of crime. These tips can help you to reduce your risk of being a victim of crime. These common sense actions, also, empower you by building confidence in your ability to protect yourself and be independent. The Power of Prevention can go a long way in reducing crime.

### Neighbors - The Front-Line Defense.

- Work out a buddy system with a neighbor. Check on each other every day to make sure each is safe.
- Let neighbors know when you go on a trip so they can watch out for your house or apartment. Return the favor when they go away.
- Join a Neighborhood Watch Group in your city or town and get involved.

### When You're At Home

- Lock up! Get good locks and use them. Exterior doors—deadbolt lock. Sliding doors—special lock or broom handle in door track. Windows— Good Locks or pins for all accessible windows.
- Make a photographic inventory of jewelry and antiques. Also, make a list for insurance purposes with descriptions, makes, and serial numbers.

- Have a trained police officer assess the security of your home to learn about ways to prevent burglary.
- If you suspect a burglar has broken into your home, don't go in! Go to a neighbor or call 911 on a cell phone.
- Light up! Make sure all porches; entrances, and yard are well lit.
- Use self-timers when you are away or coming home after dark.
- Use a wide-angle peephole (at your height) to ID people at your door.
- Ask all service and sales people for an ID before you let them in your home. Don't hesitate to call their employers for verification.
- Be sensible about keys. Don't put an address tag on your key ring, and don't hide an extra key under a doormat or flowerpot.
- Hang up immediately on harassing or obscene phone calls. If the caller persists, call police and the phone company to file a complaint.
- For an extra measure of protection: Don't keep large amounts of cash at home. Use Direct Deposit for Social Security or pension checks.
- Mark valuable property like VCRs, televisions, cameras with an Operation ID number.

### When You're Out and About

- Stay alert and tuned into your surroundings. Don't daydream.
- Go out with a friend when possible.
- Try carrying a small change purse with only the money or credit cards that you need, instead of a large handbag with straps.

- Keep your wallet in an inside jacket or front pants pocket.
- Don't over-burden yourself with packages and don't wear shoes or clothing that restrict you.
- Walk on well-lit, busy streets.
- Stay away from vacant lots, alleys, or construction sites.
- Avoid displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.
- If someone grabs your purse or packages, try to keep your balance, get away, and shout for help.
- Try to walk confident and relaxed.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, leave quickly.

### When You're On The Bus

- Use busy, well-lighted stops.
- Don't fall asleep. Stay alert!
- Watch who gets on or off the bus with you. If you feel uneasy, walk directly to a place where there are other people, or sit near the driver.

### When You're Driving

- Always lock your car doors. Never leave keys in the ignition when you leave the car, even for a few minutes.
- Keep the doors locked and windows up. Park only in well lit, busy areas.
- Always know how to get where you are going before you leave.
- Lock packages in the trunk. Don't leave tempting articles in view in a locked car. Lock them in the trunk.
- Never, never pick up hitchhikers.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full at all times.