



Raleigh Police Department Community Newsletter

This newsletter is produced by the Public Affairs Unit of the Raleigh Police Department. It provides Raleigh citizens with crime prevention tips, seasonal information, and upcoming RPD community activities.

The holiday season is always a special time of year. It is also a time when busy people may become somewhat careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. We can never be too careful, too prepared, or too aware. This holiday edition of the RPD Community Newsletter features tips to keep you safe for a happy holiday season.

Please share this information with family, friends, and neighbors. The Raleigh Police Department wishes you a safe, happy, and peaceful holiday season.

AVOID GETTING YOUR PACKAGES STOLEN

'Tis the season for giving and for having boxes stolen off your doorstep. December is always a leading month for crime, with big-ticket presents under the tree. Now that so many of us are shopping online and having packages left unattended in front of our homes, a thief can just scoop them up. Every day is Christmas for real-life Grinches.

- **Control the shipping process**-If you know how and when a package is set to arrive, you'll have a better chance of keeping it safe. Start with the retailer. Many online retailers offer different shipping options, so look for an option that provides tracking.
- **Solicit your neighbors to help**-If your neighbors are home during the day, ask them to bring in your packages—or at least give the side eye to strangers who approach your property.
- **Set up a hiding spot**-Don't leave your porch bare around the holidays. Theft is a crime of opportunity: Thieves usually grab packages they can easily spot. Position plants, chairs, or that inflatable snowman close to your door. While a potted plant won't block a TV box, it can help hide smaller boxes from street view.
- **Invest in a camera**-Security cameras pointing at your front door, hallway or driveway is better than no camera at all. A security camera will serve as a great deterrent for criminals and it helps to prevent package theft. It can also help law enforcement to identify the thieves.



- **Require a signature on delivery**-If your package that demands delivery by YOUR signature was left unattended, or even worse, lost, because they didn't follow the protocol, delivery companies are liable to legal actions and you are entitled to a full refund or replacement.
- **Insure Your Upcoming Packages**-Insuring your precious holiday parcel will guarantee you reimbursement if, unfortunately, your delivery was stolen or lost before you lay your hands on it.

DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR NEW GIFTS TO THIEVES



Burglars know that many households have new, and oftentimes expensive items in their homes following the holidays - especially items such as new computers, televisions, cameras and other electronic equipment.

In too many cases, residents make it easy for burglars to figure out which homes to target by putting boxes that identify their new gifts in plain view. Avoid becoming an easy target for post-holiday burglars by not leaving boxes for new electronics and other items outside for several days at a time.

Instead, break down any boxes you are throwing out. Think about keeping broken-down boxes inside – in a garage, for example, until the evening before your regular recycling pick-up.

Some burglars actually look inside garbage/recycling cans for evidence of holiday gifts. And, of course, if you see someone suspicious, call 9-1-1.

CELEBRATE RESPONSIBLY

Drinking and driving is a danger to everyone on the road. Anyone with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or higher is in violation of NC law and may go to jail. The risk isn't worth it. The following are a few tips if you are hosting a party or just attending one:

Hosting a party:

- Have non-alcoholic beverages available for the party guests.
- Serve food before serving alcoholic beverages.
- Have alternative transportation available for intoxicated persons. Don't let guests drink and drive.

Attending a party:

- If you choose to drink alcohol at a party, don't drive. Designate a sober driver or make other plans for a ride home before heading out.
- Never let friends drive drunk. Give them a ride or arrange for a safe ride home.
- Do not ride in a vehicle if the driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Always wear your seatbelt.

However you choose to celebrate, please do so responsibly.

EXTEND THE LIFE OF YOUR HOLIDAY GIFTS: GET THEM ENGRAVED

If an item gets stolen and is recovered, engravings allow officers to return the items to their owners.

Conspicuously mark each item of personal property with a unique identifier, preferably your driver's license number. Law enforcement agencies across the country have access to this number through state motor vehicle databases. Assign each item a different number by adding a digit to the end of your driver's license number for each item.

For items that cannot be marked such as jewelry, musical instruments, antiques, etc., place the object against a plain background and take several color photographs from different angles. Include a ruler with the picture for scale. Label the pictures and keep them in a safe place.

