



# HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



### CRIME PREVENTION BULLETIN

**DATE:** November 30, 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Holiday Crime Prevention

Holiday shopping season is a busy time for most people, including criminals. But we still need to be aware of our surroundings while we're out and about so that we don't become easy targets.

Regardless of your location, take a few moments to read your environment by scanning your immediate area for people or things that seem out of place. Don't assume that just because there are people around that everything is safe. For instance, in parking lots or garages, be alert to someone who appears to be standing around for no good reason. They might simply be waiting for someone to pick them up, but that person could also be an opportunistic criminal waiting to grab your shopping bags or your purse once they see that you have dismissed their presence.

#### Shopping safety tips:

- Don't flash large amounts of cash or offer tempting targets for theft such as expensive jewelry or clothing. Carry only the credit or debit cards that you need.
- Pay close attention at the checkout line. Don't put your purse or wallet down on the check-out counter, and don't get out your cash or credit card until it's actually time to pay.
- Be wary of distractions in the checkout area. A small diversion that causes you to turn your attention away from the counter can allow someone to snatch your purse or wallet.
- Carry a purse or shoulder bag close to your body, not dangling by straps. Put a wallet in an inside pocket of your coat or front trouser pocket.
- Don't fumble for house or car keys. Have them in hand, ready to use when you reach the door.
- Park in well-lit areas, as close as possible to the entrance of the store or mall.
- Avoid talking on a cell phone when walking to and from your vehicle so you can focus your full attention on your surroundings.
- If you must leave your purchases in your vehicle between stores, lock them in the trunk or put them out of sight. Thieves will target a vehicle that obviously contains merchandise over one that does not.
- Don't electronically unlock your vehicle until you are within door opening distance. This helps stop a thief from getting into the car before you can get to it.
- If you are ready to leave the mall and feel uneasy about entering the parking lot or garage by alone, ask for a security escort.
- If approached by someone while you are in your vehicle in a parking lot or garage, do not open your door. If you need to speak to them, open your window just enough to do so. If you believe you are in danger, call 911 immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

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