



## Crime Reduction Department

Essex Police - Uttlesford District

For just a few pounds there are a variety of different technological solutions that can massively increase the security of your property e.g. the 'sneak-in alarm'. A simple device that you hang over the inside metal door handle and switch on (specially good for technophobes). If anyone touches the outside handle it will activate with a piercing siren. They are under £10 and will deter those trying to get into side and backdoors possibly to steal car keys?? There are all sorts of other goodies and if you buy in bulk you can get a job lot for very little (a box of 25 sneak ins come out at under £3 each). Also there are shed alarms which will scare off the most determined of intruders at around £10 each.

**Despite repeated warnings we are finding that over 50% of our thefts from vehicles are from cars that have not been locked!!**

**Please, please, please take the simple step of LOCKING YOUR CAR!**

### **HOME SECURITY - Most homes are burgled during daylight hours by opportunists.**

- Make your home look and feel occupied.
  - Leave a radio switched on to a talking station
  - Using low energy bulbs, fit daylight sensors to some interior lights, so that they come on when it gets dark, dull or overcast.
  - Do not close your curtains during the day.
  - Close your garage door if you remove your car..
- Secure your boundaries.
  - Repair fences and fit trellis to the tops.
  - Use Defensive Planting on vulnerable boundaries -Berberis, Hawthorn, Pyracantha etc.
  - Cut back undergrowth and lower hedges in your front garden to at least 4 feet.
- Secure your house.
  - If you don't have multi-point locking (as fitted to most modern U-PVC doors) ensure that all external locks conform to BS3621
  - Fit additional locks to windows. Use push-button locks on frequently-used windows.
  - Consider installing an intruder alarm. Modern systems are very reliable and are far less expensive than most people think. See above as well.
- Protect your possessions
  - Invest in a small safe (around £25.00) and use it to keep your valuables safe – incl spare credit cards, driving licence, passports etc.
  - Security mark all your electronics and other valuables.

### **SHED AND GARAGE SECURITY - Many sheds and garages are burgled at night**

- Sheds
  - Site your shed near your house and fit good exterior lighting.
  - Fit a close-shackled padlock to your shed and bolt the fittings through the door and frame.
  - Hang net curtains at shed & garage windows – Burglars seldom steal what they can't see.
  - Secure garden equipment, cycles, mowers, ladders and power tools with a steel cable.
- Garages
  - Drill a hole in the runners of up-and-over doors (just above the wheels) and fit a bolt or padlock to prevent the door from opening.
  - If your garage has a back door, fit a lock certified to BS3621
  - Property mark all tools and equipment.

### **HEATING OIL SECURITY - Now a high-value commodity, heating oil is often stolen at night**

- **MOVE IT:** If the tank is located away from the house, move it closer where you can keep a better eye on it
- **SCREEN IT:** If the tank can be seen from the road, then screen it with fencing or hedging.
- **CAGE IT:** Consider building a metal cage around it with a secure entrance gate.
- **CONCEAL PIPE WORK:** Reduce the locations that it can be attacked. Conceal external pipe work.
- **CUT THE POWER SUPPLY:** Ensure that any electrical control boxes or switches are in a secure environment. (Your house?)
- **BLOCK VEHICLE ACCESS:** Keep vehicles as far away from your tank as possible, Use locked gates, parking posts or hooped barriers. Install a driveway alert monitor
- **INVEST IN GOOD LIGHTING:** Fit movement activated lighting and consider the type that activates a buzzer in the house when it switches on. Adjust the sensitivity to prevent false alarms.
- **CHECK YOUR HOME INSURANCE:** Ensure that your home insurance covers you for the loss/theft of your heating oil.

**CAR AND VAN SECURITY – Vehicle security is very good these days – It’s usually the owners who are the problem!**

- On the Driveway
  - If possible, garage your car. Many people fill their garage with junk and leave their £20,000 car on the driveway!
  - Modern cars cannot be taken without the keys. Thieves will sometimes burgle houses to get them, so do not leave them lying around. Take your keys to bed!
  - If you have a van, reverse it up to a wall to deter theft of its contents.
  - Always remove valuables (incl portable sat navs) and lock your car – even if it’s kept in the garage. See above – a car thief told me recently that 1 in 5 cars are not locked!
- Away from home
  - Lock your vehicle whenever you go to pay for fuel.
  - Do not leave valuable items in view, especially wallets, handbags and portable sat-navs.
- In attended car parks, always park near the attendant’s kiosk and do not leave the ticket in the car.
- Park in well-lit areas

**CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFTS – A new trend caused by the escalating value of scrap metal.**

- Commercial Vehicles
  - Ensure that your compound is well lit.
  - Park your vehicles closely together, against a wall if possible.
  - Secure your yard – mend holes in fences.
  - Install CCTV.
  - If possible, allow staff to take vehicles home.
- Private Owners
  - 4x4s and high wheelbase cars should be garaged.
  - Fit movement activated lighting.
  - Install a ‘Driveway alert’.

**CARAVAN, TRAILER AND HORSEBOX SECURITY – usually working at night, thieves in rural areas will often travel across fields to reach their targets.**

- Farms, yards and compounds
  - Fit lockable gates if possible.
  - If you live near the yard, install movement activated lighting or leave lights on all night.
  - Consider CCTV
  - Remove the rear light bulbs – Police will usually stop vehicles travelling at night without lights.
  - Reverse trailer close to a wall and fit a hooped barrier over the A-frame.
  - Fit wheel clamps, hitch-locks and alarms
- Private dwellings and driveways.
  - Install exterior lighting.
  - Fit parking posts in front of trailers and caravans.
  - Fit hitch-locks and wheel clamps.
  - Fit an alarm in caravans.
  - Remove rear light bulbs.
  - Display postcode on the caravan roof.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SECURITY COMPANIES, PRODUCTS OR SERVICES,  
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CRIME REDUCTION OFFICER ON  
01376 556 233 (Uttlesford) or 01376 556210 (Braintree)**

**Please note:** The advice given in this document does not guarantee that you won't again be a victim of crime, but merely suggests measures that might deter criminal activity. No contract, either express or implied, has been entered into with Essex Police, its officers, staff, agents or employees.