

A Friendly Holiday Safety Reminder

Officer Joe Reyes, CNY

It's that time of the year again when we will all go out shopping, happily buying gifts for our friends and loved ones. Unfortunately, it's also a time when would-be thieves are on the lookout for an easy score. We at the MGH Police, Security and Outside Services Department want everyone to have a happy and safe holiday, so we would like to give you just a few tips on how to ensure that you have taken the necessary precautions to help you do so.

1. It is never a good idea to carry large sums of money or credit cards in your wallet or purse. When shopping, try to take only what you plan on using. Too many items create too much opportunity for thieves and too much of a headache when having to replace what was stolen.

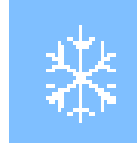
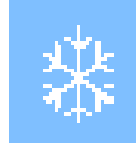
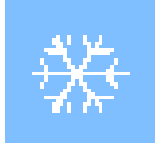
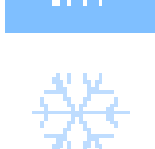
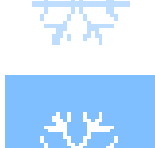
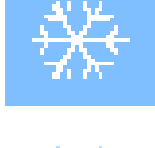
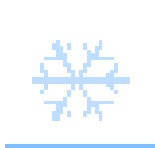
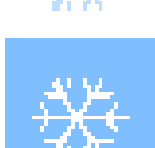
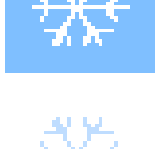
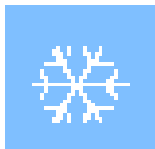
2. Avoid leaving wrapped gifts in your vehicle since this will make you an easy target for would-be thieves. If you must leave gifts in your vehicle, make sure you secure your vehicle and activate the alarm if you have one. Also try to leave your vehicle in a well lit area when at a store or shopping mall. A thief will think twice before attempting to gain entry into your vehicle if the area is very bright.

3. Never leave your GPS attached to your windshield or dashboard. These items are very popular with thieves and present an easy target for them. Laptops, gym bags, wallets or even coins in your vehicle ashtray will give cause to what we call "smash and grab" crimes. You should avoid leaving these items in your vehicle.

4. Be aware of your surroundings. One way of doing so is to limit the use of iPods and the like as they create a distraction and can limit your awareness.

5. Whenever possible, travel with a friend. People are less likely to try something when you travel in pairs!

In conclusion, these are referred to as "crimes of opportunity". We at Police, Security and Outside Services just want to make you aware that sometimes during these hectic days ahead, people sometimes forget to do the little things that keep them safe and secure. Happy holidays to all!



Don't Become a Victim of Fraud

Officer Ed Farley, CNY

One of the latest scams that has cropped up in recent months is being referred to as the "lawyer scam". Perpetrators use the phone to place calls to an unsuspecting victim and accuse them of defrauding a bank. The caller states that they are calling on behalf of an attorney's office, sometimes using the name LLC and sometimes using the name NLC. They allege that the victim was being charged with fraud for not paying back what is being referred to as a "payday" loan, a loan that people have acquired to pay bills and debt via the Internet where money is deposited directly into your bank account. Victims have requested supporting documentation from the callers and have been told they would not get any until the following Monday at 11:00 AM. They are then told by the caller they are going to take them, their employer and their references to court unless they are paid. In some cases, the caller has left messages, which have included the threatening phrase, "God help you if you don't comply." The callers state they are willing to accept a portion of the fees they allege are owed immediately in lieu of full payment at a later date. In most cases, the victims have not applied for or received a "payday" loan.

The telephone number that these phone calls come from is normally 239-217-4061. This has been traced to North Fort Myers, Florida. It should be noted that no law office would refer to themselves in a generic way, such as LLC or NLC. Other companies are now being investigated as part of this scam. Some are United Legal Processing Division, Midland Marketing and Affidavit Consolidation Services (ACS). In some cases the caller has stated that the victim could be arrested for not paying immediately. No one can be arrested for non-payment of a consumer loan.

It is very important to know that when applying for any type of loan, your personal information may end up in the hands of a thief if handled incorrectly or if the loan processing agency is fraudulent. Please be very cautious when providing any personal information over the phone. If you feel that you have been targeted, the following websites are great tools for reporting and information gathering: www.ftc.gov/phonefraud and www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud/fraud. As always, the MGH Police, Security and Outside Services Department is available for consultation if you think you might be a victim. If you are a victim of fraud please contact the Special Investigations Unit at 617-726-1474.



Winter Safety

Supervisor Alan Moulaison, CHC

Winter Weather Warnings and Advisories:

The first step we all can take is to stay informed about the weather and make our plans for work, travel, or recreation accordingly. A **Winter Storm Watch** means that severe winter weather conditions may affect your area. A **Winter Storm Warning** indicates that severe winter conditions are imminent. A Winter Storm Warning for **Heavy Snow** means that snowfalls of at least 6 inches in 12 hours or 8 inches in a 24-hour period are expected. **Blizzard Warnings** are issued when sustained wind speeds or frequent gusts of at least 35 miles per hour are accompanied by considerable falling snow. **Winter Weather Advisories** are issued for specific situations, which will be explained in each individual National Weather Service forecast.

Preparing For A Winter Storm:

At home, keep handy a battery-powered flashlight, radio, extra food that requires little or no preparation, and bottled water. Make sure you have extra blankets and lots of warm clothes. Be aware of potential fire and carbon monoxide hazards if you plan to use an emergency heating source such as a fireplace, wood stove or space heater.

In a vehicle, keep a shovel, blankets, windshield scraper, container of sand, booster cables, tow rope, flashlight, battery-operated radio, first aid kit, a change of clothing, and high-energy snacks. Obviously, this is a lot of stuff to carry in any vehicle. You may wish to make a "travel emergency kit" that contains many of these items. Put the kit in your vehicle when you are going to be traveling a long distance, or if you know that hazardous conditions have been forecasted.

One of the best things to keep with you when traveling is a cellular telephone. With a cell phone you will be able to call for emergency help when needed.

During A Winter Storm:

At home, to save heat, close off unneeded rooms, cover windows at night and block cracks under outside doors with towels. Eat right. Maintaining adequate food and water intake makes it possible for your body to store and use energy for producing its own heat.

If stranded in a vehicle, call for help with your cellular telephone. Attach a brightly colored cloth to your antenna or somewhere on the vehicle to attract attention. Run the engine about 10 minutes each hour for heat. Open your window slightly for fresh air and make sure your exhaust pipe isn't blocked with snow. Turn on your emergency flashers when the engine is running in order to attract attention. Exercise by moving arms, legs, fingers and toes to keep blood circulating and to keep warm.

If stranded outside, try to stay dry and cover all exposed parts of your body. Prepare a windbreak or snow cave for protection from the wind. If possible, build a fire for heat and to attract attention. Don't eat snow. It will lower your body temperature. Melt it first.

Winter Can Be Safe and Fun:

Winter in Massachusetts can be fun for those who enjoy outdoor activities like skiing, snowboarding, riding snowmobiles, snowshoeing and so much more. The winter season can be safe and fun. Chances are you've never been stranded or have experienced a true winter emergency. A few simple steps can help keep you from ever having to. Always check weather reports before traveling. If a winter storm or blizzard is forecasted, seriously consider changing or delaying your travel plans. Make sure you have winter emergency supplies at home and in your vehicle. Dress appropriately for the weather, no matter if you're traveling a few city blocks or many miles. Never take unnecessary chances with winter weather.



Congratulations!

Bonnie Michelman, Director of Police, Security and Outside Services has been appointed to the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. HSAC provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security and comprises leaders from state and local government, first responder communities, the private sector and academia.

Homeland Security....*It's Everyone's Responsibility*

Manager Rebecca Coburn, CNY

Protecting the MGH is a 24 hour a day job for MGH Police, Security and Outside Services; however every employee can do their part to help too.

One of the best ways employees can help protect MGH is by ensuring only necessary and authorized information is released to the public. The intent of the "bad" person is to try and obtain information in order to bring harm to the institution. This is often times referred to as "information gathering".

Sample questions an infiltrator might ask could be, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- *How many employees work at your site?*
- *How many security officers do you have in the emergency room?*
- *How many security officers do you have in other areas?*
- *Where are your evacuation gathering sites?*
- *What are your intensive care unit capabilities?*
- *What type of research do you do in your facility?*

Information gathering can be done in a variety of ways: in person, over the phone, via computer or by any other communication device. Many people assume they are just dealing with telemarketers who are trying to obtain more business. Many people even think these infiltrators have a legitimate reason to ask. DO NOT be fooled!

Being mindful on what information you give out and to whom you give it to. It is critical that you are cognizant of these types of solicitations and help protect the MGH from harm. If you are approached in the above manner, be sure to notify MGH Police, Security and Outside Services. We are a 24/7 operation, we never close!

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

CAROLYN WHITE

CWHITE7@PARTNERS.ORG

617-724-7833

JENNIFER GOBA

JGOBA@PARTNERS.ORG

617-724-3036

