How To Make Your Home Safer

The following comes from a friend of ours, Mr. Phil

He is concerned with what may await us in the months to come and offers his suggestions on how to make you home safer and more secure. The text speaks of stopping burglars, but improvements outlined below work against any intrusion. These simple suggestions can make a lot of difference.

We hope you find it useful.

Eric

WINDOW INSPECTION:
Windows on the ground floor require attention. Give some thought to blocking them with a table or other form of barrier that will make an invader climb over, make noise and use up time getting into the premises. Try not to leave ground floor windows with a wide open space in front of them. Never assume a window is too small for an intruder to enter. Home intruders have come up with clever ways to enter the smallest windows. Be concerned about in-wall air conditioners that can be pushed in and then become easy entrances for burglars. You can secure the in-wall A/C unit by driving a large eye ring wood screw into the studs on each side of the A/C unit. Then run a 5/8th or 11/16th rope through the eye ring screws across the A/C unit and secure the rope tightly to the A/C with large cable clamps. Be sure all windows are locked correctly. Keep windows locked at all times and lock them immediately after you have closed one. Never block the view from your windows, allowing you to see an intruder on your property. Never leave anything outside your home that can be used to help an intruder gain access to your home, such as a step stool or ladder. Home invaders will not be carrying their own ladders but will use anything they find to their advantage. Very seriously consider a home central station alarm system. If you have a system, place NEW fresh looking stickers on all entrances. Old stickers will appear to a home invader to be from the previous home owner! Alarm stickers and signs are a good deterrent! Check your windows, especially if you have windows made of vinyl or plastic and that have plastic locks. If so, you need a secondary security measure such as a metal bar or a cut wooden closet pole wedged in. If you have basement casement windows, check if they are standard or reinforced hinges. Look to have protective laminate applied to the inside glass or baked into the glass. This will keep the glass from smashing with a single blow. The laminated windows will take repeated blows and are very difficult to shatter.

DOOR INSPECTION:

It's human nature to focus on the front door but intruders will look for what is the weakest door. You need to give consideration to back doors, side doors and interior garage doors. Doors that appear old, dull and have fading paint are the first type of door the invader will kick in. The worst case of door security is a door with the hinges facing outside. If a back or side door has a window you should have some kind of deadbolt that is difficult to reach if the window's glass is broken. Doors that enable you to see who is at your front door can prevent "push-in" home invasions. Having deadbolts, chain locks or throw-over locks helps. Check the length of the screws holding in the "strike plate" of your doors. Unscrew one to check. You should have at least 3″ or 3 1/2″ screws holding the strike plate. If not, replace the screws and drive new ones deep into the wall stud holding the strike plate.

ALARM SYSTEMS:

A home having an alarm system with a central station can be the best preventive measure you can take. Homes that have alarms are three times less likely to be invaded and burglarized. Intruders would rather move and target a home that is not alarmed. Make sure you have signage stating the home is protected by a security alarm system with a central station. Place signs or decals at potential entrances of the home. Motion detectors, glass-break sensors on sliding glass doors and windows are important! Also, you can consider a Doorbell Camera that monitors your front door once the doorbell is rung. You can use a computer or smartphone to observe who is at your front door (away from home and still see your front door.) These devices activate and video record once the doorbell is rung. With this system, you can also have your central station video monitoring of your front door 24/7.

LIGHTS:

Have good outdoor lighting at night. Homes with well-lit exteriors are broken into way less than dark homes. Think in terms of illuminating all sides of the house. Check your adjoining neighbors' houses for night illumination. Criminals always look for dark homes but they really like dark homes surrounded by other dark homes. Talk to your neighbors about this joint security issue!

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Don't plant trees or shrubs too close to or against your home structure, especially windows or doors. All criminals like to hide behind trees, bushes and shrubs while trying to enter a window or door. Again, have burglar alarm signs in new or very good condition visible at all home entry points.