CHILDREN
- If possible, leave small children at home with a trusted babysitter.
- Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case your child is separated from you.
- Teach children to stay close to you at all times while shopping.
- Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom.
- Children should never be allowed to go to the car alone and they should never be left alone in the car.
- Teach children their full name, address and telephone number to give to police officers or mall security. Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.

AT HOME
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave the house, even for a few minutes.
- When leaving home for an extended time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail.
- Indoor and outdoor lights should be on automatic timers.
- Leave a radio or television on so the house looks and sounds occupied.
- Large displays of holiday gifts should not be visible through the windows and doors of your home.
- When setting up a Christmas tree or other holiday display, make sure doors and passageways are clear inside your home.

STRANGERS AT YOUR DOOR
- Be aware that criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts.
- It is not uncommon for criminals to take advantage of the generosity of people during the holiday season by soliciting donations door-to-door for charitable causes although no charity is involved.
- Ask for their identification, and find out how the donated funds will be used. If you are not satisfied, do not donate.
- Donate only to recognized charitable organizations.

HOSTING A PARTY
- Have non-alcoholic beverages available for party guests.
- Find alternative transportation for intoxicated guests.
- Arrange for an official designated driver for your party who will not drink at all.

ATTENDING A PARTY
- Have something to eat before consuming alcoholic beverages.
- Eat high protein foods that will stay in your stomach longer and slow the absorption of alcohol into your system.
- Remember: only time will eliminate the alcohol from your body. Know your safe limit.
- Never drink and drive.

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This pamphlet is provided to inform the public about identity theft. The Monterey Police Department makes no warranty or accepts any liability associated with its use. The information contained in the pamphlet was current at the time of printing. Special thanks to Menlo Park Police Department for providing material for this pamphlet.

We can never be too careful, too prepared or too aware.
Please share these Holiday Safety Tips with family, friends and neighbors.
DRIVING

- Avoid driving alone or at night.
- Keep all car doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm or use an anti-theft device.
- If you must shop at night, park in a well-lighted area.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells, or cars with tinted windows.
- Park as close as you can to your destination and take notice of where you parked.
- Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.
- Do not leave packages or valuables on the seat of your car. This creates a temptation for thieves. If you must leave something in the car, lock it in the trunk or put it out of sight.
- Be sure to locate your keys prior to going to your car. Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door.
- When approaching and leaving your vehicle be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.
- Ask mall or store security for an escort before leaving your shopping location.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

- Mark gifts with your California Driver License or Identification Card number.
- Do not use your Social Security Number.
- For items that cannot be marked with an engraver, photograph or videotape the items.

SHOPPING

- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member.
- Dress casually and comfortably.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Avoid carrying a purse or wallet, if possible.
- Always carry your California Driver License or Identification Card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.
- Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- Keep cash in your front pocket.
- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, and buses.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.