

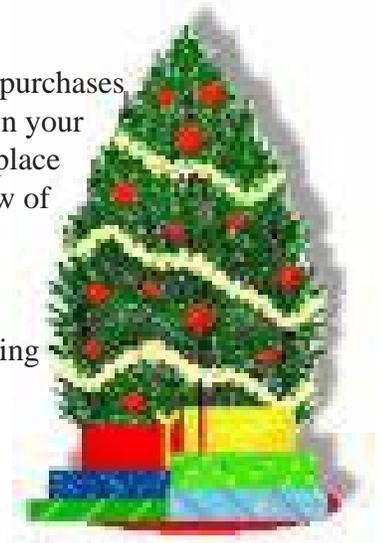


# Holiday Safety Tips

*Don't look now but Christmas is just around the corner. And for most people that means it's hi-ho, hi-ho, it's off to the malls we go. With that in mind we invite you to take a few moments to review some holiday shopping safety tips that will make your holiday shopping endeavors a bit safer and enjoyable. All of us at the Sheriff's Office would like to wish you all the joys of the holiday season and the most prosperous of new years!*

## *While you are shopping...*

-  Before heading out for a day of shopping make it a point to let someone know where you are planning to go and what time you expect to be home. Remember to take your **fully charged** cell with you but leave your expensive, flash jewelry at home. Whenever possible try to shop during daylight hours.
-  There's safety in numbers! Take some friends along with you on that shopping trip.
-  Obey all traffic laws while driving... law enforcement officers will be out in greater numbers during the busy holiday season to help keep our roadways safe. Buckle up, stop for red lights, and be sure to watch your speed. Be sure your youngsters are safely secured in the appropriate safety and booster seats. We want you and your loved ones to be around for the holidays.
-  Cash, credit, or check? It's always best to carry as little cash as possible and pay for as many of your purchases as you can with a credit card. Women should avoid carrying a purse if possible but if a purse is necessary try to use one with a short strap that doesn't dangle from your shoulder.
-  When you arrive at the mall try to park in a well lit, highly traveled area. Be sure to remove all electronic items like GPS devices from your dashboard and any other items that might attract a thief from plain view and then **LOCK YOUR CAR** before you leave it.
-  When you return to your car after a day of shopping, especially at night, have your car keys in hand, make it a point to look for any suspicious people or activity during the walk to your vehicle or around your car once you get there. We also recommend that you take a look at the inside of your vehicle before getting in... especially if you drive a large SUV or van.
-  If your shopping itinerary involves several different stops where you make purchases, be sure to hide those newly acquired gifts from prying eyes. Locking them in your trunk is the best choice or, if your vehicle does not have a trunk, cover them, place them under a seat, or do whatever is necessary to remove them from the view of passer bys.
-  Be wary of strangers who approach you with questions or trying to engage you in a conversation. Con artists and distraction thieves work overtime during the holiday season.



*Have a safe and happy holiday season!*