



SECURING FIREARMS



FACT: The crime of residential burglary can occur at any time during a home owner's absence. More and more criminals are finding and stealing firearms (handguns) when burglarizing homes. While all property belonging to a home owner is important the fact that firearms (handguns) can be easily found and removed during a burglary is of *particular danger*.

PREVENTION: The following are crime prevention considerations regarding securing a firearm in the home:

Understand that residential burglary occurs many times during the day time hours. Criminals find empty homes and neighborhoods due to people being at work, running errands, etc. Fewer potential witnesses provide a better opportunity for the criminal.

Homeowners should make sure that any firearm they own has been obtained / purchased legally and is registered in accordance with state and local laws.

Firearms are a targeted item of theft during a residential burglary. Obtaining a firearm may be the main motive of the burglar.

Homeowners should always store firearms in a manner consistent with safety and theft prevention!

Never leave an unsecured firearm in a vehicle.

Firearms that are easily accessible to the homeowner are easily accessible to the burglar. Burglars know the common hiding spots and will take the time to toss the house to locate the firearm if they want it bad enough.

Unsecured firearms fall into the hands of the criminal and pose a threat to the homeowner if they come home and interrupt the burglary. Stolen firearms end up on the street and in the hands of criminals who use them to commit a variety of other crimes. **SECURE YOUR FIREARMS!**

SECURING TECHNIQUES: Homeowners should store firearms in a manner consistent with safety and theft prevention. Firearms that are easily accessible to the homeowner are easily accessible to the burglar. Burglars know the common hiding places and will take the time to tear apart a house or vehicle to locate the firearms they want.

- Common places homeowners keep firearms include –
Master bedroom night stands. Dresser drawers. Under the mattress or in a closet.
Other places of storage in a home may be of individual preference to the homeowner usually based upon their anticipation of needing to retrieve their firearm in a dangerous or threatening situation. For example, in the bathroom.
- Gun safes/cabinets or other safe firearm storage options can be implemented by the homeowner. Visit a gun store or gun safe showroom to learn your options. Ask questions about security and levels of fire protection. Always try to secure safes to the floor or walls to help prevent thieves from being able to just grab the safe and walk away or load it on a dolly.
- Trigger locks should be present on all firearms.
- Unsecured firearms that fall into the hands of criminals pose a threat to the homeowner if they attempt a burglary. If they end up on the street in the hands of criminals the stolen firearm is used to commit a variety of other crimes.
- Be especially careful about children and guns. Make sure children understand the seriousness of playing with guns and the accidents that can happen. Always assume a gun is loaded.
- Never point a gun at someone in jest or playing.