



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT
RECENT BURGLARIES IN WINDSOR SQUARE**

November 2023

Dear Windsor Square Neighbors,

As you have probably heard, there has been an increase in burglaries recently in Windsor Square and surrounding neighborhoods. There are several commonalities to the recent burglaries we need to be aware of:

- . Many of the recent burglaries have been “knock-knock” burglaries, with the perpetrator ringing the doorbell or knocking, and then immediately attempting to break into the home once they determine no one is inside. Of specific note is a person, usually a woman, coming up to the door with a dog on a leash to knock.
- . Perpetrators are frequently observed wearing a full face covering or mask outdoors, even as COVID-related masking outdoors is becoming less commonplace. Perpetrators are also commonly seen wearing athletic attire (sweats) and a sweatshirt hoody with the hood up over their heads, even on warm days. Many have been observed wearing a backpack as well.
- . Many of the burglaries have started in the same way, with 2 or 3 burglars jumping over a side fence or gate, and then breaking in through a back door or window.
- . Another perpetrator typically waits in a getaway car, which may be parked several doors down the street. Often the getaway car is a late-model luxury sedan, but cars of all types have been observed.
- . The burglars don’t seem to care about burglar alarms or cameras; even so, a home with an alarm is 3x less likely to be targeted, and video evidence is very valuable for police.
- . While most burglars don’t seem to care about alarms or cameras, we have heard of at least two recent incidents in Windsor Square where the cable providing internet service to the home may have been cut in advance of a burglary or attempted burglary.

. Prevention is critical -- burglars are exiting the premises (typically through the front door) within 6-10 minutes, making it difficult for LAPD or even private security like SSA or ADT to respond even if an alarm is triggered.

What can you do?

. **ALWAYS set your alarm.** Even when you are leaving for short errands. Set your alarm to "Home" or "Stay" mode when you are at home. If your alarm system or cameras have a geofencing mode that automatically arms them when you leave the home (based on the location of your mobile phone), make sure you enable that mode.

. **Ensure that your alarm system has glass break detectors.** Burglars breaking window glass, often at the rear of a house, is a very common initial entry method.

. **Please keep an eye on your block, and especially your closest neighbors.** Get to know your closest neighbors and what cars they drive, or which cars are typically parked in front of their homes. If you see a car that you don't recognize with someone just sitting or standing next to it, call ADT or SSA Security, or whatever private security company you subscribe to, to investigate. Take a picture of the license plate and the car with your cellphone. The LAPD has stressed that license plate numbers are the key information they are missing in many burglaries and attempted burglaries.

. **Bring your garbage and recycling bins in promptly on pickup day.** If your neighbor's cans are out late, take them in for them. Similarly, if you are out of town, have your neighbor, housekeeper or gardener put your trash cans out on collection day, even if they are not full, and have them taken in by the end of the day.

. **Leave a car in your driveway if you plan to be gone for more than a few days.** This makes your home look occupied.

. **Check the security of the back of your house,** especially doors and windows that may not be adequately secured. Many of the recent burglaries have occurred via a door or window at the rear of homes. Lock every door and window whenever you leave home.

. **Keep a few lights on when you leave the house.** Or set a timer or home automation routine. Again, this makes your home look lived in, especially when you are away.

. **Get a Ring doorbell** or a similar device that allows you to answer the door when you are not home. Newer models have "full view" video that will show you the person at your door from head to toe and can even identify and alert you to packages left on the doorstep. Many of these video doorbells can allow you to automatically respond with a recorded message if it takes more than 5-10 seconds to answer the door.

. **Consider adding cameras at other points around your home.** Ring, Nest and other brands make motion-sensing cameras that record motion, specifically from people, around your home. Cameras with automatic nighttime lighting that respond to motion are especially effective.

. **Secure the Internet Cabling on the Outside of Your Home.** Given that some burglars are targeting internet cables to shut off cameras or alarm systems prior to entry, consider using protective conduit or metal casing where cables enter your home. This makes it more difficult to quickly cut the cables. It's also worth discussing additional security measures with your internet service provider or alarm system provider.

. **Backup Cellular Connection for your Alarm System.** If your security system communicates primarily over a landline or internet, you should have a backup internet connection, such as a cellular 4G/5G data connection, for your security system. This ensures that even if the main internet or landline is cut, your security systems stay operational. Some advanced alarm systems such as SimpliSafe come with cellular backup built-in. (Backup cellular is generally not used or available for camera systems given the internet bandwidth and speed requirements of video cameras.)

. **Set Up Alert Notifications.** If your internet goes down, configure your security or camera system to send you a notification via cellular data. Again, some newer alarm systems do this automatically. That way, you can take immediate action, even if you are not at home.

. **Watch your surroundings carefully when you leave or arrive home.** Be watchful for suspicious cars or individuals who may be waiting for you to leave or arrive. If you see anything suspicious, circle the block again and check things out.

. **REPORT EVERYTHING OF NOTE.** Report crimes, attempted crimes, suspicious people and incidents of note. File a police report for all crimes with LAPD. Please also report ALL crimes or suspicious incidents to your Block Captain. If you don't know your Block Captain, please email blockcaptains@windsorsquare.org and we will connect you with them.

We don't want to frighten our neighborhood, but the number of burglaries is at a level where we all need to take a more active part in protecting our homes, and our neighborhood. It takes only a little more watchfulness to catch these burglars in the act or turn up a piece of evidence like a license plate that will lead to an arrest.

Thank you,

The Windsor Square Association
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