



MAYOR THOMAS J. BRODERICK, JR.

PRESENTS

CITY OF ANDERSON

POLICE DEPARTMENT

SAFETY PROGRAM

FOR

SENIOR CITIZENS

&

CRIME WATCH MEMBERS



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**Mayor Thomas Broderick, Jr. & Anderson Police Department
Offer Crime Prevention Tips for Seniors
“BOSS” Be Observant, Smart, Safe.**

Crime and the fear of crime create special problems for the elderly. Crime prevention is everyone’s responsibility, not just a job for law enforcement. Seniors can learn how to protect themselves from crime by following these simple, commonsense suggestions. Share these tips with your neighbors and friends to make it tough for criminals to work in your neighborhood.



AT HOME...

- Never open your door automatically. Install and use a peephole.
- Install deadbolt locks on all outer doors.
- Lock your doors and windows. (Three-quarters of the burglaries involving older persons involved unlocked doors and windows, and less than one-half of these burglaries are reported.) Keep your garage doors locked.
- Vary your daily routine.
- Use “Neighbor Watch” to keep an eye on your neighborhood. A concerned neighbor is often the best protection against crime because suspicious persons and activities are noticed and reported to police promptly.
- Notify neighbors and the police when going away on a trip. Cancel deliveries such as newspapers and arrange for someone – a neighbor’s child, perhaps – to mow the lawn if need be. Arrange for your mail to be held by the Post Office or ask a neighbor to collect it for you.
- Keep your home well-lit at night, inside and out; keep curtains closed.
- Turn on an outside light from dusk until dawn, preferably one in front and in back. Criminals like the cover of darkness. Motion lights and lights with sunlight detectors are good to have.
- Turn on an inside light if you and your family will be out for the evening. Timers for lamps are easy to use. Also, leave a radio or television on. If a thief thinks someone’s home, he’s less likely to break in.

- Do not leave notes on your door when you are gone and do not hide your keys under the mat or in other conspicuous places.
- Trim shrubs, bushes, and trees in front of or near your home's windows so they can't be used to hide someone entering your home.
- Be wary of unsolicited offers to make repairs to your home. Deal only with reputable businesses.
- Keep an inventory with serial numbers and photographs of resalable appliances, antiques, and furniture. Leave copies in a safe place.
- Ask for proper identification from delivery persons or strangers. Don't be afraid to ask for proper identification. If they are legitimate, they won't mind.
- If a stranger asks to use your telephone, offer to place the call for him or her yourself.
- Never let a stranger into your home.
- Never give out information over the phone indicating you are alone or that you won't be home at a certain time.
- If you arrive home and suspect a stranger may be inside, DON'T GO IN. Leave quietly and call 911 to report the crime.



WALKING...

- If you are attacked on the street, make as much noise as possible by calling for help or blowing a whistle. Do not pursue your attacker. Call 911 and report the crime as soon as possible.
- Avoid carrying weapons...they may be used against you.
- Always plan your route and stay alert to your surroundings. Walk confidently.
- Have a companion accompany you.
- Stay away from buildings and doorways; walk in well-lighted areas.
- Have your key ready when approaching your front door.
- Don't dangle your purse away from your body. (Twelve percent of all crimes against the elderly are purse snatchings and street robberies.)

- Don't carry large, bulky shoulder bags; carry only what you need. Better yet, sew a small pocket inside your jacket or coat. If you don't have a purse, no one will try to snatch it.



WHILE SHOPPING...

- Carry your purse very close to you. Never leave your purse in a shopping cart. Never leave your purse unattended.
- Don't carry any more cash than is necessary. Many grocery stores now accept checks and automatic teller cards instead of cash.
- Don't display large sums of cash.
- Use checks where possible.



IN YOUR CAR...

- Always keep your car doors locked, whether you are in or out of your car. Keep your gas tank full and your engine properly maintained to avoid breakdowns.
- If your car breaks down, pull over to the right as far as possible, raise the hood, and wait inside the car for help. Avoid getting out of the car and making yourself a target before police arrive.
- At stop signs and traffic lights, keep the car in gear.
- Travel well-lit and busy streets. Plan your route.
- Don't leave your purse on the seat beside you; put it on the floor, where it is more difficult for someone to grab it.

- Always have your keys out and ready before leaving a building to approach your vehicle. Searching through a purse or briefcase after you've reached your car provides criminals an excellent opportunity to sneak up on you.
- Be especially alert when leaving stores or shopping malls. This is a time when criminals know you are carrying cash, checkbooks, credit cards, or other valuables.
- Look around and inside your vehicle before you get in. If you are concerned for any reason, simply walk past your car and call for help.
- Lock your door immediately upon entering the vehicle. Make this your first action—even before you put the key in the ignition even if you are going for only a short ride.
- Check your surroundings before getting out of your car. If something or someone strikes you as out of place or threatening, drive away. If it's dark, go to a well-lighted, heavily traveled area.
- Lock bundles or bags in the trunk. If interesting packages are out of sight, a thief will be less tempted to break in to steal them.
- When returning to your car, check the front and back seat before entering.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Use a two-piece key ring with your car keys separate from your other important keys. Give parking valets or mechanics your car keys only. Supplying the entire set of keys creates an opportunity for duplicates to be made.



BANKING....

- Many criminals know exactly when government checks arrive each month and may pick that day to attack. Avoid this by using Direct Deposit, which sends your money directly from the government to the bank of your choice. And, at many banks, free checking accounts are available to senior citizens. Your bank has all the information.

- Never withdraw money from your bank accounts for anyone except **YOURSELF**. Be wary of con artists and get-rich schemes that probably are too good to be true.
- You should store valuables in a Safe Deposit Box.
- Never give your money to someone who calls on you, identifying himself as a bank official. A bank will never ask you to remove your money. Banks need the use of your money, and they don't want one of their customers to invite crime by having large amounts of cash around.
- When someone approaches you with a get-rich-quick scheme involving some or all of your savings, it is HIS get-rich-quick scheme. If it is a legitimate investment, the opportunity to contribute your funds will still be there tomorrow after you have had time to consider it.
- If you have been swindled or conned, report the crime to your local police or Prosecuting Attorney's office. Con artists count on their victim's reluctance to admit they've been duped, but if you delay, you help them get away. Remember, if you never report the crime, they are free to cheat others again and again and you have no chance of ever getting your money back.

SENIOR CITIZENS SAFETY TIPS

As a senior citizen, the chances of becoming a victim of crime increase dramatically. You may have a lifetime of experiences, but being aware of your surroundings, staying alert for situations that may make you vulnerable, following your intuition, and watching out for con games can make all the difference in staying safe.

Because many criminals target those victims who are considered vulnerable, it is especially imperative that senior citizens be the "**BOSS**" (**Be** **O**bservant, **S**mart, **S**afe), whether at home or during their travels.

- Be alert of your surroundings whether you are in an office building, walking down a street, in a shopping mall, waiting for a bus, or driving a vehicle.
- Place your wallet in the inside coat or front pants pocket.
- Wrap a rubber band around your wallet to make it harder to be removed from your pocket.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash in your wallet, purse or in your pockets.
- Try to sit close to the bus driver or the "exit" while riding public transportation.

TELEPHONE CALLERS

You control conversations and information flow on your telephone. If you do not know the caller, do not volunteer information. Should the caller ask: "Who is this?" you should respond: "Whom are you calling?" or "Whom do you wish to speak to?" Make the caller identify whom he/she is calling. If you do not receive an appropriate response, hang up.

Do not allow yourself to be drawn into conversations with stranger callers, census/survey takers or business promotion salespersons where you are asked to reveal your name, address, marital status, personal history information, etc. **Never** give out personal information over the telephone. If the call is legitimate and the representative actually requires the information, arrange a meeting at your convenience. The legitimate caller will respect your position and agree to an alternate approach. If in doubt, ask the caller

for the name of the business and telephone number so that you can return the call. Then, check the number to ensure that it corresponds to the caller's information.

TELEMARKETING FRAUD

Thousands of Americans continue to receive unsolicited phone calls from telemarketers trying to sell a variety of products. The majority of telemarketers represent legitimate businesses and adhere to ethical sales techniques. Unfortunately, others do not. Unscrupulous telemarketers are the smoothest of operators, successful at swindling consumers out of millions of dollars.

According to the Better Business Bureau and the FTC, here's how you can reduce your risk of becoming a victim of telemarketing fraud:

- Be skeptical of "too good to be true" telephone offers.
- Resist pressure for an immediate decision and ask for written follow-up materials that explain the offer.
- Agree to pay no more than the price of a postage stamp when notified about "winning" a sweepstakes. All legitimate sweepstakes must allow a "no purchase necessary" way to play the game and collect the prize.
- Never provide your credit card or checking account numbers to a caller from an unfamiliar company without first checking the company out with your Better Business Bureau, state consumer protection agency, or state Attorney General.
- Ask to be placed on the company's "do not call" list to reduce the number of unwanted telephone solicitations you receive.

AT THE DOOR

Most of the time, the person at your door will be there for a legitimate reason, whether he/she is a friend or a stranger. If the visitor is a recognized friend, there should be no problem. If the visitor is a stranger, you should immediately become alert. Never open your door to a stranger. If a stranger is legitimately at your door, he / she will not object to you being cautious. Establish the caller's identity and the reason for the visit. If he or she refuses to show identification and will not leave, quietly go to the telephone and notify the police. If you live in an apartment complex, telephone your

building superintendent. Should the caller produce identification, but you still are not sure of the validity of the visit, telephone the caller's business office for confirmation. If you still feel uncomfortable, do not open the door; ask the caller to return in 30 minutes or an hour.

This will allow you sufficient time to contact a friend or relative to be present when the caller returns. Being cautious increases your safety and well-being.

There are a number of ways you can secure your doors. If you do not feel your locks are adequate, we recommend that you contact a professional locksmith or a friend to assist you. Should you consider improving the security of your home, investigate thoroughly your lock requirements and the cost of upgrading the security of your doors because a lock is only as effective as the door and frame on which it is installed. Keep your garage door closed and keep screen doors locked as well.

HOME REPAIR FRAUD

Senior citizens are approached by individuals offering to perform various home repair jobs such as driveway repair, roof or gutter repair, and asphalt repair. The perpetrators claim to have materials left over from other jobs, offer significant discounts, or that they were sent by a close relative or friend. Once the job is completed, the cost of the work is suddenly more than the first quote, and payment in cash is demanded. The con artists may even offer to provide a ride to the bank so the victim can convert his/her check to cash.

Citizens are advised always to get references from home repair workers. The elderly are advised to be especially leery of workers from outside the local area. If you believe that you are being ripped off, contact your local police and your personal lawyer prior to making payment. Finally, contact the Indiana Attorney General's Office, the Better Business Bureau, and the County Clerk's Office to check if any complaints have been registered against the company offering this service prior to entering into any agreements.

More Tips from Mayor Thomas J. Broderick Jr. & Anderson Police Department



Burglary Prevention...

Have you ever been locked out of your home? Were you able to get in anyway? Now think about it; if you could break into your own home, it's just as easy for someone else to break in, too. One burglary occurs every 25.7 seconds, so approximately 3,300 per day. The average time it takes to commit a burglary typically ranges from 90 seconds to 12 minutes. Therefore, it is important to take preventative measures. Strong locks and good neighbors who look out for one another can deter burglars effectively. Here are a few tips that can help you keep you and your property safe and secure.

Check Your Locks

- Make sure every external door has a strong, well-installed deadbolt lock. Key-in-the-knob locks alone are not enough.
- Sliding glass doors offer easy access if they are not properly secured. You can secure them by putting a broomstick or dowel in the inside track to jam the door or by installing commercially available locks. To prevent the door from being lifted off the track, drill a hole through the sliding glass frame and the fixed frame, then insert a pin.
- Lock Double-hung windows with key locks or "pin" your windows by drilling a small hole at a 45-degree angle between the inner and outer frames, then insert a nail that can be removed. You should secure basement windows with grilles or grates (but make sure that they can be opened from the inside in case of fire).
- When you move into a new house or apartment, re-key the locks.

Check Your Doors

While we all like to feel that once we close and lock our doors, we're safe and secure. The truth of the matter is that a lock on a flimsy door is about as effective as locking your car door but leaving the window down with your wallet on the front seat.

- All outside doors should be metal or solid wood.
- Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in all entry doors so that you can see who is outside without opening the door. Door chains break easily and don't keep out intruders.
- If your doors don't fit tightly in their frames, install weather stripping around them.

Check the Outside

Take a look at your home from the outside, and keep in mind the following tips to help make your home as safe as it can be:

- Burglars hate bright lights. Install outside lights and keep them on at night. Motion-detector lights can be particularly effective.
- Keep your yard clean. Prune shrubbery so it doesn't hide windows or doors. Cut back tree limbs that a burglar could use to climb to an upper-level window.

Burglars Can Do More Than Just Steal

While most burglars prefer to strike when no one is home, intruders can commit other crimes such as rape, robbery, and assault if they are surprised by someone entering the home or if they pick an occupied home.

- If something looks questionable—a slit screen, a broken window, or an open door—**don't go in**. Call the police from a neighbor's house, a cell phone, or a public phone.
- At night, if you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely, then call the police. If you can't leave, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call the police. If an intruder is in your room, pretend you are asleep.
- One other important note—never leave a message on your answering machine indicating that you may not be at home or live alone. Instead, say, "We're not available right now."

What If I Live in an Apartment?

While apartment living is a little different from living in a single-family home, there are still some additional things that you can do to make sure that you, your loved ones, and your property remain safe and secure. Similar to Neighborhood Watch, members of Apartment Watch learn how to make their homes more secure, watch out for one another and members of the community, and report crime and suspicious activity to the police.

Some things you can do:

- Join a Crime Watch Group.
- Never let anyone you don't know into your building or past security doors.
- Organize citizen patrols to walk around the apartment complex and alert police to crime and suspicious activities. Don't forget to patrol parking lots, stairways, laundry rooms, and playgrounds.
- Publish a newsletter that gives local crime news, recognizes Apartment Watch Captains, and highlights community activities.
- Have a reception in the lobby of your building or a cookout on common property so neighbors can get to know one another.
- Start a Safe Haven Program for children—places where they can go in emergency or scary situations.
- Check the complex on a regular basis for problems such as burned-out light bulbs, dark corridors, uncollected trash, or broken locks on mailboxes and doors. Report any such problems to the building manager. Keep pressure on management to make sure it provides adequate security.
- Organize meetings to brainstorm how you can help each other, such as starting an escort service for the elderly.

Top 10 Scams Targeting Seniors

Financial scams targeting seniors have become so prevalent that they're now considered "the crime of the 21st century."

Why? Because seniors are thought to have a significant amount of money sitting in their accounts.

Financial scams also often go unreported or can be difficult to prosecute, so they're considered a "low-risk" crime. However, they're devastating to many older adults and can leave them vulnerable with little time to recoup their losses.

It's not just wealthy seniors who are targeted. Low-income older adults are also at risk of financial abuse.

1. Health Care/Medicare/Health Insurance Fraud

Every U.S. citizen or permanent resident over age 65 qualifies for Medicare, so there is rarely any need for a scam artist to research what private health insurance company older people have in order to scam them out of some money.

In these types of scams, perpetrators may pose as Medicare representatives to get older people to give them their personal information, or they will provide bogus services for elderly people at makeshift mobile clinics, then use the personal information they provide to bill Medicare and pocket the money.

2. Counterfeit Prescription Drugs

Most commonly, counterfeit drug scams operate on the Internet, where seniors increasingly go to find better prices on specialized medications.

This scam is growing in popularity. Approximately 5% of seniors become victims every year, and this percentage probably doesn't even give an accurate picture of this problem, as many scams go unreported.

The danger is that besides paying money for something that will not help a person's medical condition, victims may purchase unsafe substances that can

inflict even more harm. This scam can be as hard on the body as it is on the wallet.

3. Funeral & Cemetery Scams

The FBI warns about two types of funeral and cemetery fraud perpetrated on seniors.

In one approach, scammers read obituaries and call or attend the funeral service of a complete stranger to take advantage of the grieving widow or widower. Claiming the deceased had an outstanding debt with them, and scammers will try to extort money from relatives to settle the fake debts.

Another tactic of disreputable funeral homes is to capitalize on family members' unfamiliarity with the considerable cost of funeral services to add unnecessary charges to the bill.

In one common scam of this type, funeral directors will insist that a casket, usually one of the most expensive parts of funeral services, is necessary even when performing a direct cremation, which can be accomplished with a cardboard casket rather than an expensive display or burial casket.

4. Fraudulent Anti-Aging Products

In a society bombarded with images of the young and beautiful, it's not surprising that some older people feel the need to conceal their age in order to participate more fully in social circles and the workplace. After all, 60 is the new 40, right?

In this spirit, many older Americans seek new treatments and medications to maintain a youthful appearance, putting them at risk of scammers.

Whether it's fake Botox like the one in Arizona that netted its distributors (who were convicted and jailed in 2006) \$1.5 million in barely a year or completely bogus homeopathic remedies that do absolutely nothing, there is money in the anti-aging business.

Botox scams are particularly unsettling, as renegade labs creating versions of the real thing may still work with the root ingredient, botulism neurotoxin, one of the most toxic substances known to science. A bad batch can have health consequences far beyond wrinkles or drooping neck muscles.

5. Telemarketing

Perhaps the most common scheme is when scammers use fake telemarketing calls to prey on older people, who, as a group, make twice as many purchases over the phone than the national average.

While the image of the lonely senior citizen with nobody to talk to may have something to do with this, it is far more likely that older people are more familiar with shopping over the phone and might not be fully aware of the risk.

With no face-to-face interaction and no paper trail, these scams are incredibly hard to trace. Also, once a successful deal has been made, the buyer's name is then shared with similar schemers looking for easy targets, sometimes defrauding the same person repeatedly.

Examples of telemarketing fraud include:

“The Pigeon Drop”

The con artist tells the individual that he/she has found a large sum of money and is willing to split it if the person will make a “good faith” payment by withdrawing funds from his/her bank account. A second con artist is often involved, posing as a lawyer, banker, or some other trustworthy stranger.

“The Fake Accident Ploy”

The con artist gets the victim to wire or send money on the pretext that the person's child or another relative is in the hospital and needs the money.

“Charity Scams”

Money is solicited for fake charities. This often occurs after natural disasters.

6. Internet Fraud

While using the Internet is a great skill at any age, the slower speed of adoption among some older people makes them easier targets for automated Internet scams that are ubiquitous on the web and email programs.

Pop-up browser windows simulating virus-scanning software will fool victims into either downloading a fake anti-virus program (at a substantial cost) or an actual virus that will open up whatever information is on the user's computer to scammers.

Their unfamiliarity with the less visible aspects of browsing the web (firewalls and built-in virus protection, for example) makes seniors especially susceptible to such traps.

One example includes:

Email/Phishing Scams

A senior receives email messages that appear to be from a legitimate company or institution, asking them to "update" or "verify" their personal information. A senior receives emails that appear to be from the IRS about a tax refund.

7. Investment Schemes

Because many seniors find themselves planning for retirement and managing their savings once they finish working, a number of investment schemes have been targeted at seniors looking to safeguard their cash for their later years.

From pyramid schemes like Bernie Madoff's (which counted a number of senior citizens among its victims) to fables of a Nigerian prince looking for a partner to claim inheritance money to complex financial products that many economists don't even understand, investment schemes have long been a successful way to take advantage of older people.

8. Homeowner/Reverse Mortgage Scams

Scammers like to take advantage of the fact that many people above a certain age own their homes, a valuable asset that increases the potential dollar value of a certain scam.

A particularly elaborate property tax scam in San Diego saw fraudsters sending personalized letters to different properties, apparently on behalf of the County Assessor's Office. The letter, made to look official but displaying only public information, would identify the property's assessed

value and offer the homeowner, for a fee, of course, to arrange for a reassessment of the property's value and, therefore, the associated tax burden.

Closely related, the reverse mortgage scam has mushroomed in recent years. With legitimate reverse mortgages increasing in frequency by more than 1,300% between 1999 and 2008, scammers are taking advantage of this new popularity.

As opposed to official refinancing schemes, however, unsecured reverse mortgages can lead property owners to lose their homes when the perpetrators offer money or a free house somewhere else in exchange for the title to the property.

9. Sweepstakes & Lottery Scams

This simple scam is one that many are familiar with, and it capitalizes on the notion that “there’s no such thing as a free lunch.”

Here, scammers inform their mark that they have won a lottery or sweepstakes of some kind and need to make some payment to unlock the supposed prize. Often, seniors will be sent a check that they can deposit in their bank account, knowing that while it shows up in their account immediately, it will take a few days before the (fake) check is rejected.

During that time, the criminals will quickly collect money for supposed fees or taxes on the prize, which they pocket while the victim has the “prize money” removed from his or her account as soon as the check bounces.

10. The Grandparent Scam

The Grandparent Scam is so simple and so devious because it uses one of older adults’ most reliable assets: their hearts.

Scammers will place a call to an older person, and when the mark picks up, they will say something along the lines of: “Hi Grandma, do you know who this is?” When the unsuspecting grandparent guesses the name of the grandchild, the scammer most sounds like the scammer has established a fake identity without having done a lick of background research.

Once “in,” the fake grandchild will usually ask for money to solve some unexpected financial problem (overdue rent, payment for car repairs, etc.), to be paid via Western Union or MoneyGram, which don’t always require identification to collect.

At the same time, the scam artist will beg the grandparents, “please don’t tell my parents, they will kill me.”

While the sums from such a scam are likely to be in the hundreds, the fact that no research is needed makes this a scam that can be perpetrated repeatedly at very little cost to the scammer.

If you suspect you’ve been the victim of a scam...

Don’t be afraid or embarrassed to talk about it with someone you trust. You are not alone, and there are people who can help. Doing nothing could only make it worse. Keep handy the phone numbers and resources you can turn to, including the local police, your bank (if money has been taken from your accounts), and Adult Protective Services.

It is not always strangers who perpetrate these crimes. Over 90% of all reported elder abuse is committed by an older person’s own family members, most often their adult children, followed by grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and others.

To obtain the contact information for Adult Protective Services in your area, call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116 or 800-992-6978 or email: ncea.acl.gov/Resources/state.aspx [NCEA - State \(acl.gov\)](http://NCEA-State(acl.gov)).

Home Fire



*Working together
for Home Fire
Safety*

More than 3,400 Americans die each year in fires, and approximately 17,500 are injured. An overwhelming number of fires occur in the home. There are time-tested ways to prevent and survive a fire. It's not a question of luck. It's a matter of planning ahead.



*Every Home Should
Have at Least One
Working Smoke
Alarm*

Buy a smoke alarm at any hardware or discount store. It's inexpensive protection for you and your family. Your local fire department may offer these at no cost. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. A working smoke alarm can double your chances of survival. Test it monthly, keep it free of dust, and replace the battery at least once a year. Smoke alarms should be replaced after ten years of service or as the manufacturer recommends.



Prevent Electrical Fires

Never overload circuits or extension cords. Do not place cords and wires under rugs, over nails, or in high-traffic areas. Immediately shut off and unplug appliances that sputter, spark, or emit an unusual smell. Have them professionally repaired or replaced.

Use Appliances Wisely

When using appliances, follow the manufacturer's safety precautions. Overheating, unusual smells, shorts, and sparks are warning signs that appliances must be shut off and replaced or repaired. Unplug appliances when not in use. Use safety caps to cover all unused outlets, especially if there are small children in the home.



Alternate Heaters

- Portable heaters need their space. Keep anything combustible at least three feet away.
- Keep a fire in the fireplace. Use fire screens and have your chimney cleaned annually. The creosote buildup can ignite a chimney fire that could easily spread.
- Kerosene heaters should be used only where approved by authorities. Never use gasoline or camp-stove fuel. Refuel outside and only after the heater has cooled.



Affordable Home Fire Safety Sprinklers

When home fire sprinklers are used with working smoke alarms, your chances of surviving a fire are greatly increased. Sprinklers are affordable – they can increase property value and lower insurance rates.

Plan Your Escape

Practice an escape plan from every room in the house. Caution: Everyone should stay low to the floor when escaping from fire and never open doors that are hot. Select a location where everyone can meet after escaping the house. Get out, then call for help.

Caring for Children

Children under five are naturally curious about fire. Many play with matches and lighters. Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching your children that fire is a tool, not a toy.



Caring for Older People

Every year over 1,000 senior citizens die in fires. Many of these fire deaths could have been prevented. Seniors are especially vulnerable because many live alone and can't respond quickly.

**Fire
Safety**



About Fire Safety & Prevention

The most effective way to protect yourself and your home from fire is to identify and remove fire hazards. 65 percent of house fire deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. During a home fire, working smoke alarms and a fire escape plan that has been practiced regularly can save lives.

Reduce Your Risk

Your home may be full of fire hazards that you aren't aware of. From your kitchen stove to a romantic candle to festive holiday lights, common household items can turn dangerous very quickly

- If a fire occurs in your home, **GET OUT**, **STAY OUT**, and **CALL** for help.
- Talk with all household members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan twice a year.

YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

There are many things you can do in your neighborhood to keep you and your family safe. Remember, the actual implementation of taking precautions is what works. Awareness by you and your neighbor, along with information sharing, can greatly reduce criminal activity.

AT HOME

- Invest in a security system. You can get a service that's monitored by an alarm service, or if you can't afford that, you can find inexpensive alarms that let you know someone's moving in the house or has opened a window or door.
- If you park your car outside overnight, keep your garage door opener out of site. Don't leave valuables in your car, such as cell phones.
- Think twice about using tools and websites that let your friends know where you are while you're out of town. You may be telling a thief you're not home.
- Always lock your garden sheds and garages.
- Sliding glass doors are vulnerable. Special locks are available for better security. Use curtains on garage and basement windows.
- Educate everyone in your family on how to stay safe.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Friends and neighbors should work together to protect each other. Here are some ways to do it:

- Organize a **neighborhood watch**. Your local police or sheriff's department will gladly help you with planning and organizing the group, as well as give you and your neighbors training on what to look for and what to do in the event you see or suspect criminal activity
- Get to know your neighbors! If you don't know everyone who lives on your street, you should. That way, you can recognize who does and doesn't belong in your neighborhood
- Keep your eyes open. If you're outside, take a look around every now and then at the activity going on. If you're retired or work from home, take a look out of your windows from time to time. Do you see a strange car or someone you don't recognize?
- If there are children living on the street, try to designate one or two "safe houses" where they can run to in case a stranger tries to stop them or talk to them on the way to or from the bus stop or while playing in the yard, or in any other emergency where they may not be able to get home quickly and safely.

- If a problem persists, then you may want to consider security cameras. You may want to consider pooling resources and purchasing surveillance cameras. Post cameras can track the entrance to your neighborhood
- Let your trusted neighbors know when you will be away so they can keep an extra eye on your home.
- Reporting any unusual activity as suspicious to your Police Department may very well deter a would-be or future crime in your neighborhood or someone else's neighborhood.

You and your neighbors can make a big statement to would-be criminals that they're not welcome in your neighborhood.

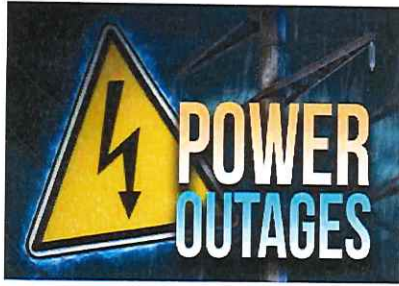
KEEPING YOU FROM INJURY

Fall Prevention

Keep in mind that anyone can fall, but older people are more vulnerable and likely to fall. The Center for Disease Control reported that one out of every three people aged 65 and half of people over 80 will have at least one fall a year. It's important to be aware of the dangers that could be lurking in your own home. Preventing falls in the homes of the elderly is essential to ensuring the best quality of life for your loved ones as they age.

Falls are not a rite of passage with aging; they can be avoided with a few small modifications in and around the home:

1. Tape down all area rugs. Area rugs are a major trip hazard. If they're not properly secured to the floor, they'll likely buckle or roll up at the corners, creating hot spots for falls.
2. De-clutter main thoroughfares. The chaos of daily life can make it easy for clutter to pile up, but shoes, newspapers, clothes, books, etc., all contribute to the risk of falls for elderly adults.
3. Place nightlights in hallways and stairwells. As we age, we make more frequent trips to the restroom, especially during the night. Place nightlights in hallways leading to the bathroom to reduce tripping hazards (and account for limited vision). Also, make sure each step on the stairwell is well-lit to help seniors more easily navigate the stairs after dark.
4. Add non-slip mats in the kitchen and bathroom. The kitchen and bathroom are two places where it's common to find water on the floor. In the same way that custodians know to put up "Slippery when wet" signs on the floors of public spaces, it's important to safeguard your elderly loved one from the dangers of falls in these areas. Non-slip mats near the sinks and bathtub/shower will greatly reduce the risk of falls.
5. Consider safety supports. Whether you need to add an additional railing on the stairs or install grab bars in the bathroom, make sure to fully assess your loved one's needs. An Occupational Therapist would be able to help you figure out your exact needs for the house, ensuring that your loved one will remain safe in the home.
6. Another option is to consider a medical alert system that can be activated if a fall occurs. There are many companies that offer this type of technology, and your doctor should be consulted for advice.



During a Power Outage

Staying Safe Indoors

- Use flashlights in the dark, not candles.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic lights will be out, and roads will be congested.
- If you are using a generator, be sure you understand the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning and how to use generators safely.

Food Safety

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- First, use perishable food from the refrigerator. Perishables should have a temperature of 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4 degrees Celsius) or below to be safe to eat. Then, use food from the freezer.
- Use your non-perishable foods and staples after using food from the refrigerator and freezer.
- If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
- Keep food in a dry, cool spot and keep it covered at all times.

Electrical Equipment

- Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics.
- Turn off or disconnect any appliances (like stoves), equipment or electronics you were using when the power went out. When power comes back on, surges or spikes can damage equipment.
- Leave one light turned on so you'll know when the power comes back on.

Protecting your Pets & Animals

- Prepare a pet emergency kit for your companion animals.

POWER OUTAGE REPORT LINE-CITY OF ANDERSON

PH. 765- 648-6484

Business Office: Ph. 765-648-6187

Oxygen Therapy Safety – What to Do if You Lose Electricity



Backup Measures... You will still need to use your oxygen concentrator for blackouts or other forms of power loss. The best way to take care of a situation like this is to have a plan and backup measures that will cover you until your electricity is restored. You don't want to be left helpless until emergency medical personnel arrive, especially if you live in a rural area or a highly populated city, where many other people will need medical assistance at the same time.



Charge a Cell Phone... You should already have a cell phone, even if you only use it for emergencies. You will need to contact your electric company to let them know that your power is out, and many modern house phones won't work without electricity. Check your cell phone frequently to make sure the battery has a full or nearly full charge at all times. Power outages can happen at any time, so don't wait until the weather gets bad before making sure your cell phone has a good charge. You don't want to lose your connection with the world if the power goes out.



Get a Backup Generator... A backup power generator is especially important if you use a home oxygen concentrator, which needs power from an outlet to run. If you have a portable oxygen concentrator, you can run it from an already fully charged backup battery or plug it into electricity from your backup generator. A generator is a great investment, which will not only save the

food in your fridge from spoiling, but it will allow you to continue your home oxygen therapy until the power is restored without needing to leave your home.

If you tell your electric company ahead of time that you use oxygen therapy at home, they may even send you a backup generator for free. They will also keep you a higher priority when electricity has gone out in your area or when you call them to let them know you've lost power.



Have an Escape Plan... Not everyone can afford a backup generator. In this case, you should use your emergency cell phone to call your local fire department or police department to let them know that you are oxygen-dependent. They will likely let you come to their station to use their backup generator, and they may even be able to pick you up and bring you to the station if you don't have your own vehicle. If your home oxygen concentrator is too heavy to transport, they will likely have their own source of oxygen at their station. If this fails, you can contact emergency medical personnel. You may also have a neighbor with a backup generator who can help you if the power goes out in your town. It's also a good idea to plan ahead with people you know in the event that only your house loses power for whatever reason.



Power Outages: How to Prepare as an Oxygen Patient... Power outages can be more than a common thing depending on where you are located, and if you suffer from a chronic lung disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), power outages can cause big problems. This is especially true for patients who use stationary oxygen concentrators, which require a steady flow of power to run the concentrator. On the other hand, if you have a portable oxygen concentrator, you can rely on a lithium-ion battery until the power is restored, but it is always smart and proactive to be prepared for the worst. Do you know how to fully prepare for an unexpected power outage? We will be discussing some preventative measures you can take that will prepare you for the unexpected.



Preparing for a Power Outage with an Oxygen

Concentrator - Get in Touch with Your Oxygen Provider... If you use a home oxygen concentrator then you may want to consider purchasing a portable oxygen concentrator as well. Especially if you live in a geographical location that is known for frequent power outages due to weather. Home oxygen concentrators require a steady flow of energy to power the machine, and if the power goes out for an extended period, that means precious time without your highly needed supplemental oxygen. A portable concentrator receives its power from a rechargeable lithium-ion battery. The charge on the battery will be able to supplement your oxygen needs until the power is fixed. Purchasing a backup generator for your home is also an extremely viable option.



Be Prepared with Batteries...Power outages due to weather often occur at the most inopportune times, which is why it is always smart to prepare! Contact your portable oxygen supplier and order 1 or 2 extra batteries for your portable. You will always want to be sure they are charged and ready to go in case of an emergency power outage. You may also want to contact outside shelters and ask if they will be able to help with your oxygen situation if you are ever forced to leave home.

Contact Your Power Company

Call your local power supplier and let them know that you are a COPD patient and require supplemental oxygen, which needs a constant flow of electricity to power your equipment. This way, you will get priority when they are restoring power back to homes.



Food, Water, and Blankets... Not only will you want to be prepared from an oxygen standpoint, but you will want to be sure to have plenty of emergency supplies. A great place to start is to ensure you have a battery-powered radio, flashlight, and a cordless or cell phone. But you will also want plenty of nonperishable food items, warm blankets, pillows, can openers, bottled water, and a full supply of medication. Remember that a power outage can last a few hours or even a few days, so it is extremely important to be well-prepared on all aspects of your health and safety.