

## Safety & Security

In today's day, we have to manage and care for our own security, even here in Hiddenbrooke. The HPOA can only do so much for us as a community and they do so by maintaining a security contract with Allied Universal Security (Welcome Center) and by enforcing our CC&R's. Those rules and restrictions are there to keep our community looking and feeling its very best for everyone.

You may ask, "how do I best improve the security of my own home and vehicle?". Sadly, we are never 100% free of risk but we can certainly improve our own odds of safety, and for very little investment. Most answers lie in a common-sense approach to safety. The answer is Not to make yourself a victim. How do I do that, you ask? Here are some inexpensive suggestions:

- **Invest in a home security system.** You may wish to have it monitored or not, but that fact will be that your home could be electronically protected by sensors, cameras, and most of all, instant notifications that something has occurred.
- **Get to know your immediate neighbors.** A simple rule of five is used here. Get to know the three neighbors directly across from you and those to either side of you. Share cell phone numbers and watch out for each other's homes when someone must travel. This is true community policing!
- **Leave a light on.** At night, leave your porch light on so that passing neighbors, security or police can see your front door. It's a inexpensive way to keep your front area safe.
- **Trim back bushes and trees.** You should be able to see all windows and entry areas to your home so that those passing by can see your home and that porch light. If the front of your home is blocked by large bushes or trees, that would make it difficult and give someone a place to hide.
- **Lock your car and don't leave valuables inside.** How many times have we heard the news reporting that someone's vehicle was broken into and that a bag or backpack or camera bag or briefcase was stolen? **LOCK YOUR CAR AND DON'T LEAVE VALUABLES INSIDE!**
- **Report any and all suspicious activity to Security and to the Police.** We often see that strange vehicle or van, or person in an area that they may not belong. If one is encountered and it does not seem right to you, notify someone. You may save a neighbor or yourself from becoming victimized. If that vehicle or person is not out of place, then an apology may be warranted, but at least someone is looking out. This is community policing!

These few suggestions are cheap and easy, and you'd be surprised how much they can help. Be aware of your own surroundings and let's help keep Hiddenbrooke and our own homes as safe as possible.

Regards,

Ed Medina

Hiddenbrooke resident and Welcome Center Manager.