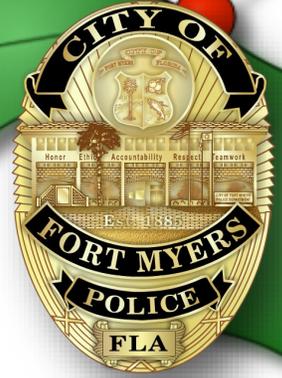




Chief Derrick Diggs

Holiday Safety Tips

The Fort Myers Police Department wishes you a safe, happy and peaceful holiday season.



Driving -

Avoid driving alone or at night. Lock all car doors with windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm or use an anti-theft device.

If you must shop at night, park in a well-lighted area. Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells, or cars with tinted windows.

Park as close as you can to your destination and take notice of where you parked.

Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.

Do not leave packages or valuables on the seat of your car. If you must leave something in the car, lock it in the trunk or put it out of sight.

Be sure to locate your keys prior to going to your car.

Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door.

When approaching or leaving your vehicle, be aware of your surroundings.

Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.

Ask mall or store security for an escort before leaving your shopping location.

Automated Teller Machine (ATM) -

If you must use an ATM, choose one that is located inside or is a drive up and in a well-lighted location.

Be aware of anyone around you.

Protect your PIN by shielding the ATM keypad from anyone who is standing near you.

Do not throw your ATM receipt away at the ATM location.

Children -

If possible, leave small children at home with a trusted babysitter.

Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case your child is separated from you.

Teach children to stay close to you at all times while shopping.

Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom.

Children should never be allowed to go to the car alone and they should never be left alone in the car.

Teach children their full name, address and telephone number to give to police officers or mall security.

Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.

Shopping -

Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with someone.

Dress casually and comfortably.

Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.

Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible.

Always carry your Driver License or Identification Card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.

Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.

Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.

Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.

Keep cash in your front pocket.

Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.

Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.

Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse they are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, on buses and other rapid transit.

Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.

Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.