

Ask the Chief

Dear Chief: Burglary to homes and businesses have been an ongoing crime problem in Alamosa and the San Luis Valley for years; what can residents and business owners do to help prevent these crimes and assist police in catching and prosecuting offenders?

Dear Concerned Citizen: First and foremost, citizens and police must partner and take ownership and responsibility if we are to be successful in preventing crime, reducing loss, and bringing offenders to justice. Specific to burglary, there are several strategies a citizen or business owner can employ to prevent a crime from occurring, reduce potential for loss, and increase our (police) ability to arrest/prosecute offenders:

- Be aware and be involved. **Note:** Nobody knows their neighborhoods or businesses better than you do. Contact the police at the same time you see someone or something suspicious in your neighborhood or near your business.
- DO NOT keep large amounts of cash or other valuable items in your home or at your business. **Note:** Consider the purchase of a quality safe and or a safety deposit box if you choose to keep valuables on your premises. Hide your safe and don't let others know you have it or where it is located.
- MAINTAIN good interior/exterior lighting. **Note:** Consider investing in exterior motion lighting or combination motion lighting/camera.
- Consider purchasing an audible alarm system. **Note:** Light and noise can be great deterrents.
- Consider investing in an electronic surveillance camera system. **Note:** These can be extremely effective in helping to identify and prosecute offenders and keep you safe while you are in your home or business.
- Have a trusted friend or family members watch your house or business, pick up newspapers or delivery items while out-of-town. **Note:** This leaves the appearance that someone is home.
- DO NOT broadcast when you will be out of town or on vacation.
- Keep electronics and valuables OUT OF SIGHT from those who can see into your home as they walk, bike, or drive by your home.
- If you discover a burglary, Call APD immediately. **Note:** Don't touch or disturb anything; allow officers the opportunity to investigate the crime scene and recover evidence.
- Make sure your home or business is clearly identifiable with street numbers affixed to your home/business. **Note:** This allows officers to more quickly respond to emergencies and allows others the ability to more quickly report suspicious people and incidents witnessed at or near your home or business.
- Consider a business security survey. **Note:** The Alamosa Police Department will come to your business and conduct a security survey and make recommendations on how you can increase your ability to not be victimized. If interested, call (719) 589-2548 or email Chief Dodd at cdodd@ci.alamosa.co.us.

Unfortunately nothing is 100% and we cannot guarantee that if you do any/all of the above you will not become a crime victim. However, all of these recommendations will reduce the likelihood of being victimized and increase our ability to successfully prosecute offenders.

Craig Dodd, Chief of Police