



CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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PRESS RELEASE

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AAPD REMINDS OFF-CAMPUS RESIDENTS TO HELP FIGHT CRIME: LOCK YOUR DOORS

After enjoying several years of declining crime statistics, Ann Arbor has recently experienced a sharp rise in reports of stolen property. **The City of Ann Arbor's Safety Services has a primary message to students: help reduce crime by simply locking doors, windows, cars and keeping valuables secure.**

- **The Lock Your Doors message is especially important during campus holiday breaks, when many students leave town.** In addition to locking all doors and windows, residents are reminded to leave on the outdoor light and put a few indoor lights on timers (timers are available at grocery and hardware stores for around \$7) and to take valuable items with residents on their holiday or secure these items out of sight.
- **Residents are always encouraged to report all suspicious activity by calling 9-1-1.**
- **More safety tips are posted on the city's web at www.a2gov.org/goblue.**

Detective Lieutenant John Seto notes that 90% of all Ann Arbor crime is stolen property-related. More specifically, 65% of all Ann Arbor thefts are through unlocked doors—with most of these incidents occurring on the off-campus area. "Students are particularly

vulnerable to theft because they live in concentrated, communal housing arrangements,” explains Seto. “Students easily fall prey to what we call ‘crimes of opportunity,’ which are easily preventable.” A thief can look for open doors and even may come up on porches to scan windows for valuables left on tables. If questioned, the stranger may say he/she is looking for a fictitious person or ask for deposit cans. Whenever this type of suspicious behavior is observed, residents are urged to call 9-1-1. Ann Arbor’s 9-1-1 phone lines are able to respond to both immediate emergencies and community crime tips.

Seto works on resolving crimes. “Students don’t want to be crime victims, and I feel deeply for everyone who has been hurt by theft,” he observes. “Imagine losing a notebook computer with class notes, term paper drafts, and personal information on friends? Or imagine finding a stranger walking through your apartment at midnight?” he adds. Most of these entry thefts would not occur if people remembered to lock their doors and valuables.

The AAPD is best able to respond to thefts when the property losses are reported as soon as possible. If something valuable appears missing, don’t assume that a roommate borrowed it and wait a week to resolve the problem. Determine if the item is truly stolen, and call 9-1-1 to report the loss. Seto’s detective team also appreciates the 9-1-1 reports of observed suspicious activities. Reducing property theft is a two-prong campaign—to remove the temptation for criminal activity by keeping doors locked—and by catching the criminals involved.

The Lock Out Crime campaign can easily reduce property theft if residents make it a habit to keep doors, cars, and valuables locked, and to report suspicious activity to 9-1-1. ###

Ann Arbor Area Property Managers—Please distribute the Lock Out Crime poster for your tenants to see in your office or building locations. These crimes of opportunity are preventable! For ¼ page small copies of the attached flyers to distribute, please contact Jennifer Sartori with the AAPD, 997-1122. Thank you for your cooperation with distributing this message.