



## Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Sheriff Larry Ashley



Crime Prevention Unit  
850-651-7410

# HOLIDAY SCAM & SAFTY TIPS

The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office has recently received information on a number of scams. With the Holidays fast approaching scammers will be working hard to take your money and identity. There are a number of things you can do to protect yourself. The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office recommends:

### Lock your car, Take your keys, and Hide your belongings:

- This simple act is proven to keep thieves out.
- Don't store your home address into your GPS "under home."
- Park in well lighted areas.

### Home safety:

- Keep doors and windows locked.
- If you plan to travel for the holidays, register for a vacation watch on Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office website and have a vacation watch order placed on your home.
- Make sure all bushes and trees are cut back. Follow the 3 feet/6 feet rule; bushes less than 3 feet & trees above 6 feet.
- Add motion lights to the outside your home.

### Door-to-Door Cons, Sales, & Surveys:

**Never allow strangers into your home, no matter how they identify themselves.**

- Once inside your home, these imposters will distract you while accomplices search for cash, jewelry and other valuables.
- If you suspect anyone going door-to-door in your neighborhood, call the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office at 850-651-7400.

### Check Out Charities Before Giving:

- Ask for a written description of programs, staff, finances, and tax deductibility of the charity. Such as an annual report.
- Don't judge a charity by an impressive sounding name. Many organizations have names similar to other well-known charities.
- Never give over the phone, through email, or door-to-door.
- Always check out the charities with the BBB at [www.give.org](http://www.give.org) or call your local BBB at 850-429-0026.

### Telephone and email scams:

- The IRS and Law Enforcement will **NEVER** call or email you that you owe money and will be arrested if you don't pay.
- Scammers ask victims to be paid by MoneyGram or Green Dot Cards because they cannot be tracked.
- Don't give any money to someone (friend or family) that emails you claiming they have been in an accident or arrested overseas and need money.