



## Winter Safety and Security

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With long dark nights and bad weather the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour increase, as do issues for personal safety in and outside your home. So, what can you do?

### Let`s start with safety

- Inspect and test lights on your cars and bicycles.
- Test smoke / carbon monoxide detectors. Don`t have one? Install at least one on each level of your home.
- Ensure you have spare batteries for torches, smoke / carbon monoxide detectors.
- Speak to your local fire safety officer to arrange a free home fire safety visit.
- Test timers that switch on home and security lighting.
- Ensure you have high visibility jackets in the car for yourself and each passenger in case of emergency.
- Cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians, joggers and dogs should all wear high visibility clothing whilst out on the roads.
- Consider elderly and/or vulnerable persons living nearby that may require your help and assistance with the above.
- Report any streetlights that are not working to your local council: each lamp column has a number on it.

### Now security

- Inspect and test security lighting. Test light timers and set them to come on at various times.
- Secure garden tools / mowers etc. that will not be used for several months.
- Check the locks work on your doors, windows, gates, sheds, outbuildings and oil tanks etc.
- Consider a house alarm and / or CCTV being installed (these are the best deterrents against burglary)
- If you already have these, have they been tested / serviced recently?
- Set your alarm and lock all windows and doors when going out. Removing keys from locks is a condition of insurance.
- Many more homes are installing cost effective CCTV kits (Plug & Play) Insure you only gather images of your property and speak with a local security company for a more professionally installed system.
- Are you in a Neighbourhood Watch Group? If not consider starting or joining one.
- Dog walkers consider joining `Dog Watch` a local community initiative to encourage dog walkers to lookout for and report suspicious activity, anti-social behaviour etc.
- Do not put Christmas presents around the tree; hide them. Use the loft if possible or place them around the house in various cupboards.
- Consider elderly and / or vulnerable persons living nearby that may require your help and assistance with the above.

For more advice on these subjects visit - [http://www.essex.police.uk/be\\_safe.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/be_safe.aspx)