



FINFLASH

IMPORTANT FACTORS TO TAKE NOTE OF WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR OWN SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF YOUR PROPERTY:

Every individual, family or business' risk exposure differs. The truth is that material goods and property can be replaced, but you can't replace a life. Take the following to heart and be pro-active:

- Test your alarm system regularly with the contracting company. If you suspect that your alarm is not working effectively, you need to make sure that the problem is attended to urgently as this puts your safety in jeopardy;
- Burglar bars that are loose or rusted should be fixed to delay entry and to give you the much needed time to escape or to protect yourself in event of an intrusion;
- Broken locks on doors and/or security gates need to be fixed and/or replaced;
- Do not leave your keys inside the locks of your doors;
- Keep your security gates locked, even if you are in your home. Do not depend on a boundary wall only to keep strangers out of your property;
- Make sure all your family members know where the panic buttons in the house are;
- Although not a requirement of most insurance companies, fit your home with a fire extinguisher and make sure that all family members know how to use it. It can save lives.
- If you have an electronic entrance gate, make sure the gate is closed before you unlock and leave your vehicle;
- Lock yourself in your vehicle before you open your electronic gate to leave your premises;
- When you park your vehicle, observe your surroundings first before you unlock the vehicle to get out. Look around you and over your shoulders, do not just depend on the side and rear view mirrors;
- When you approach your vehicle in a parking lot, have your key ready in your hand. Only use the remote to unlock your vehicle once you are at the door. Do not unlock the vehicle while you are still walking towards it;

- When you lock your vehicle with the remote, do so while you are still standing next to the vehicle and test if the car is locked. Do not walk away from your vehicle and then turn to lock it remotely;
- Ladies, please don't carry your handbag over one shoulder. If possible put the sling of the bag over your head so that you have both hands free;
- When you use an ATM, observe your surroundings before you remove your card from your purse or wallet. Keep observing whilst you do the transaction.
- Do not use your cellphone whilst you are walking. You are concentrating on the caller and not on your surroundings;
- Do not use your cellphone whilst you are driving. Besides the fact that it is against the law, your full concentration is not on the road or on the traffic in front, behind and next to you. You need to be fully alert;
- When you approach a traffic intersection and have to stop behind the vehicle in front of you, keep a safe distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you to allow you to get around that vehicle in case of an emergency. People are often the victims of smash & grabs or hijackings because they can't move their vehicle forward or sideways;
- If possible, don't use the same route home every day. Rotate your route and the time you arrive home;
- If you suspect that you are being followed in your vehicle, drive to a friend's house or the nearest police or fire brigade station. They are open 24 hours a day.
- Although you may have a sympathetic heart, beware of opening your car window to provide a beggar with food/money or purchasing items from a vendor;
- If you suspect you are being followed whilst walking, stop and turn around to walk in the opposite direction. Make direct eye contact with the person you suspect of following you. If you are being followed, the follower will immediately know that he/she has been noticed. If not, no harm was done.
- If you are alone, walk with purpose.
- Never carry your purse, wallet or cellphone in your hands for all to see.
- When visiting a restaurant, café or any other shop, do not put your purse, wallet or cellphone on the table or counter.
- Do not carry your cellphone in the back pocket of your trousers or jeans.
- When visiting shopping malls or shops, hold small children's hands and do not allow them to wander out of your sight.

There is much more to be added to this list. The main thing is always to be aware of your surroundings and to trust your instincts.

If you want to know more

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