



Burglars Target the Elderly

Within the last couple years, the incidence of burglaries committed against the elderly has increased. We have seen a number of these “distraction burglaries” in Bay Village and the surrounding communities. The method used by these criminals is to contact the elderly victim at his or her home. The criminals make a variety of claims to get into the house or have the homeowner exit the house. Past claims have included they need to borrow water from the basement, they are from a roofing company and need to check the roof under warranty, they just moved into the neighborhood and would like to check the property lines or they are from a utility company and need to check the water (or electric or gas).

Once they have the attention of the elderly homeowner, the criminals will occupy the homeowner either outside the home or in another room in the house while a second person enters the home. Often the first person will pretend to be taking to a “boss” on his cell phone, adding to the pressure on the homeowner. They are actually speaking with the second person, either in another language or through code, and telling them to enter the house. Once inside, the second person will steal money, jewelry or other valuables. Often the homeowner does not realize they have been the victim of a theft until they look for the stolen items.

We encourage our older population to never let anyone in their home unless they have been previously contacted for an appointment. Utility companies will never ask to come into your house or demand that you exit the house to assist them. If anyone arrives unsolicited and pressures an elderly person to enter the home or have them exit the home, the homeowner should lock the doors and immediately call local police. Your

local police would be more than happy to assist in confirming if someone at your house is on legitimate business.

If you have any questions, please contact the Bay Village Police Department at (440) 871-1234. We would be happy to assist you any way we can.