

TIPS FOR A SAFER HOME

- Your whole property including accessible doors and windows should be properly lit and all shrubbery trimmed.
- You need a solid wood or steel door (with a peephole or a window) and a good quality lock (deadbolts that lock from the inside and from the outside are the most secure) as well as windows that lock and have thick or unbreakable glass. You should check your door frame-it's no use in investing in a burglar proof door if it can be forced open with a single shove.
- A monitored alarm is the preferable choice, of course since police or a licensed security company is alerted by the monitoring station when the alarm is tripped. Some systems come with a "panic button" that you can install within easy reach or a wireless version that can be carried with you at all times.
- Sliding glass usually has inadequate locks and several models can be lifted out of their tracks or pried open. A reinforced plate installed on the upper track will prevent an intruder from lifting the door out, and a simple piece of wood or metal insert in the lower track will keep your door from sliding. You can also secure sash windows by jamming them with wooden wedges, or fastening wooden blocks or metal shelf brackets in the tracks to stop the window from lifting more than a few centimetres.
- Take precautions with strangers. Avoid mentioning that you live alone, especially when you are in public places. Be careful about giving such information to sales reps, delivery people who come to your door. Don't open your door to a stranger who claims he needs to use your phone because his car has broken down in front of your house. Check the identification of anyone claiming to be a Hydro or cable employee. The biggest mistake people make when it comes to home security is letting strangers into their homes.
- It's wise to use your first initial rather than your full name in the telephone directory, on your mailbox, anywhere that would identify you as a women living alone. If you ask a friend to walk you to your door at night, make sure he or she comes inside with you before leaving, assailants have been known to wait for their victims inside the door.
- Basic security is about common sense and it can make getting a good night's sleep a whole lot easier!