



# MEDIA RELEASE

**CONTACT:** David Molloy, (248) 347-0504

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Novi Police Department remind Community and Business Members of Important Holiday Safety Tips**

**November 24, 2009, Novi, Michigan** – This weekend marks the beginning of the holiday rush and the season of giving. The Novi Police Department wants to remind you not to let the spirit of giving lull you into giving criminals a better chance to do their dirty work. Criminals love the holidays as much as everyone else, especially because it's an opportune time for crime with more people shopping and traveling.

“The holiday season is a special time of year, but it is also a time when everyone becomes more busy and possibly careless, making them vulnerable to theft and other crime,” notes David E. Molloy, Novi’s Chief of Police. “We can never be too careful, too prepared or too aware and ensuring you and your family, friends, and neighbors have a safe holiday season is a priority for the Novi Police Department.”

In an effort to ensure everyone has a safe and fun holiday shopping season, the Novi Police Department offers the following Holiday Shopping Safety Tips.

Safe shopping should be a priority for everyone. When out shopping remember:

- Have a shopping plan...let someone else know what your plan is including when you intend on being home.
- Shop before dark.
- Coordinate shopping trips with friends.
- Park in a well-lighted area and try not to walk to your car alone.
- Lock your car and REMEMBER WHERE YOU PARKED IT, when you return be prepared to get in and go about your business...don't loiter about holding packages.
- Secure packages in the trunk of your vehicle.
- If you place packages in your vehicle, mid-trip, you may want to move your car.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash and don't carry it all in one place.
- Be careful with wallets and purses.

Leaving valuables in plain sight or leaving keys in unlocked cars can be costly. A few reminders regarding vehicle security:

- Always lock your car.
- Secure your valuables in the trunk, store them out of sight, or take them with you.

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- Before leaving your workplace, lock your laptop or valuables in your trunk in case you have to make a stop. You don't want potential thieves to see you placing valuables in the trunk.
- Make sure all car windows are closed when the vehicle is unoccupied.
- After dark, park in a well lighted area.
- If you have a car alarm, be sure to set it.

#### Protect your identity

- Only carry the Credit/Debit cards you will be using.
- Remember to sign your Credit/Debit cards.
- Cover your account and personal information as you hand it to the cashier. Speak softly to the cashier as you provide personal information.
- Guard any keypads as you enter your pin number.
- When using an ATM machine look around to ensure nobody is watching as you enter you pin number. Use only ATM machines that are located in well-lighted and populated areas.

#### Safe parking

- Be sure to lock your car.
- Keep any valuables left in your car out of sight. Preferably, leave valuables in your trunk.
- If you do not have a trunk, keep valuables out of sight by covering them or placing them on the floorboards or under the seat.
- Do not unlock your vehicle until you are close enough to scan the area. Look inside the vehicle before entering. Enter your vehicle as quickly as possible.
- When parking at night, park in a well-lighted area.
- Be alert when putting packages in your vehicle. Be aware of anyone watching you. If someone approaches you and you feel threatened get in your car and lock the doors until the person leaves the area. If the person does not leave, drive away.
- Return to your vehicle periodically to check on it. Do not carry so many packages at one time that you cannot react quickly.
- Move your vehicle to a different parking spot after putting packages in it.

#### Shopping Online

- Use only reputable companies and websites that have proper security features. Secure sites have an address that begins with HTTPS://. Beware of pop-ups ads that lead you to another website or ask you personal information or account numbers.
- Do not give out your Social Security number, e-mail address, telephone number, or address unless you know who is collecting the information, why they are collecting it, and how they'll use it.
- Save all transaction information.

"The Novi Police Department wishes everyone a safe, happy and peaceful holiday season," said Chief Molloy.

For more information on the Novi Police Department, visit [cityofnovi.org](http://cityofnovi.org).