

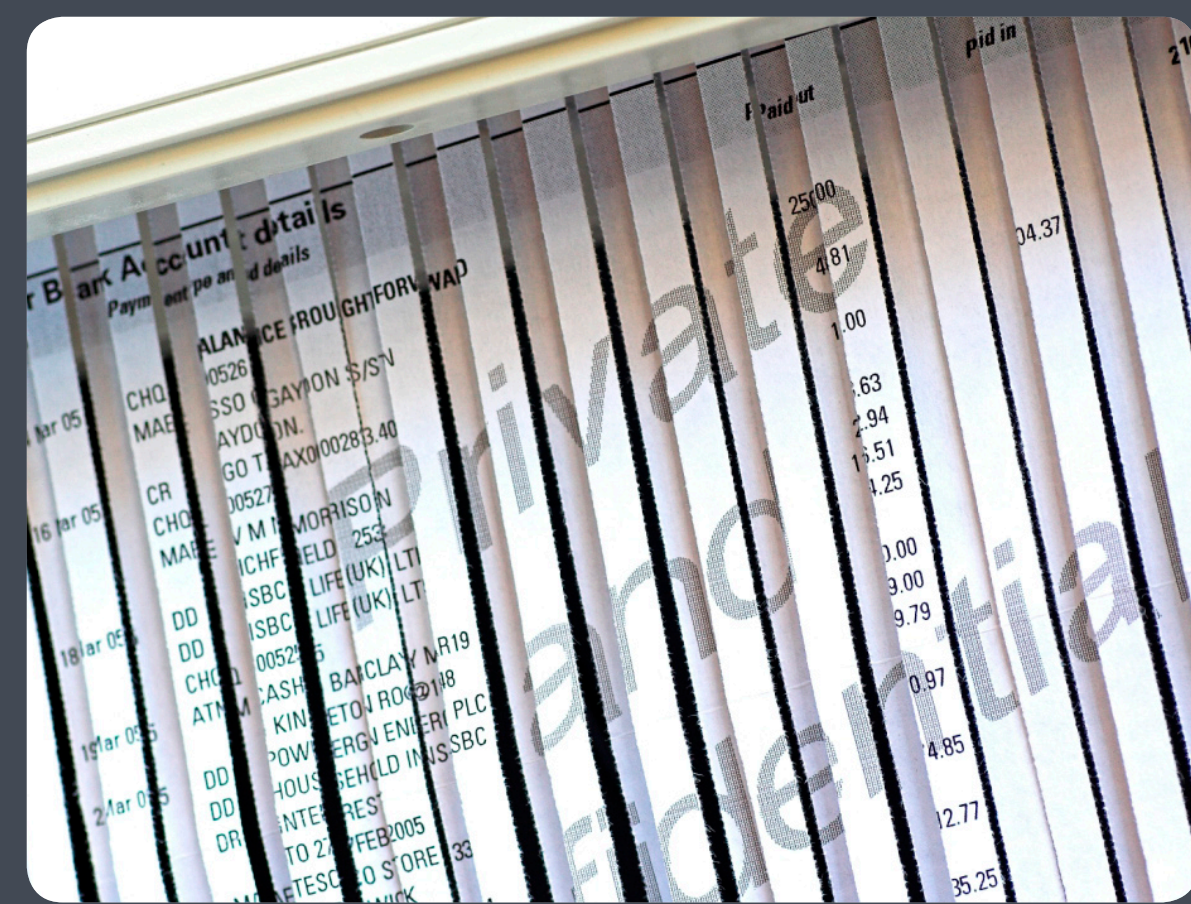
APEX POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Senior Safety

Crime prevention for seniors is essentially the same as for any other member of the community. However, there are certain types of crimes that thieves and other criminals focus on when preying on seniors. Fortunately, seniors many times have a greater sense of security and safety that has developed from a lifetime of experience and awareness.



Names, Numbers, Addresses and Everything Else That Can Get You Into Trouble

Identity theft can come in many forms and unfortunately the information needed to steal a person's identity, their credit or their hard earned money can be found in many places. Your garbage or recycling bin can contain more than enough information for a thief to open up a credit account in your name so make sure to never throw away any item intact that includes any personal information or account numbers. Shred the document using a cross-cut shredder. If someone calls asking for any personal identification information, even if they sound legitimate, refuse to give them the information.



You don't have to be a body builder to stop a robbery or other attack!

Awareness, preparedness and knowledge are your best defenses against crime. If you enjoy going out for a walk, be aware of your surroundings and walk in areas that you believe are relatively safe and stay away from areas you feel are unsafe. Look at people as they walk past and acknowledge them. This demonstrates that you are in control, aware and will certainly react if they attempt anything. Criminals love the element of surprise, so take away the surprise factor by demonstrating awareness.

When out and about carry a cell phone to call for help if needed and don't carry large amounts of cash or a purse full of credit cards. In fact, if you can get away without carrying a purse at all, that's even better!



Watching out for each other

Having seniors keep in touch with each other is one of the best ways to keep safe. Find a friend or neighbor and "check-in" with each other every day by telephone or in-person to make sure both parties are okay. If you plan to be away or go on vacation, let your check-in friend know so they don't worry!



Knock, Knock!

Many seniors react to an unexpected knock at the door by simply ignoring it. It may be a friend, neighbor or legitimate solicitor. But in some cases, it may be a crook looking for an unoccupied home to burglarize. If you hear a knock at the door, you should acknowledge it by speaking through the door. NEVER open your door to a stranger. If it is a solicitor, ask them to leave their materials and you will retrieve them later. If they insist that you open the door, call law enforcement right away.



Homeowner Scams

Over the years just about every scam has been tried and tested somewhere. Common scams are persons providing home maintenance services that don't need to be done, maybe shouldn't be done and certainly weren't requested! The scam could begin with a knock at the door from someone claiming to have been hired

by you or a family member to conduct work and claiming to have finished the work and are demanding payment. They can also take the form of someone trying to sell you a service by saying they were in the neighborhood doing other work and can provide a special deal. There are certainly many legitimate service providers and contractors, but separating the honest providers from con artists can be a challenge, especially when they become very convincing and create the feeling that if you don't pay, at least the "discounted" price, something is going to happen.

Identifying legitimate service providers

- If they claim they are working for someone else in the neighborhood, go talk with your neighbor.
- Don't let the provider in your home, talk outside.
- Confirm they are appropriately licensed and bonded.
- Don't sign a contract without someone else you trust reviewing it.
- Use caution in any payments made at the beginning of the contract.
- If there is any doubt as to the need for the work to be done call someone else for a second quote.

KEEPING SENIORS SAFE