

SEASONAL SAFETY TIPS FROM YOUR RIDGELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

By John R. Neal, Chief of Police

The holiday season is one of happiness, joy and fellowship. During the upcoming weeks, the City of Ridgeland will have an increased amount of traffic with holiday shoppers searching for that perfect gift in our retail shopping areas. While the officers of the Ridgeland Police Department strive to maintain high visibility year-round, the holiday season brings heightened awareness from our officers as our shopping numbers increase. As you travel about during the season, I am offering several safety tips which I hope you remember as you are out and about.

- Remember to park in a well-lit area and where other shoppers are present.
- If possible, shop with a group of friends or family.
- Do not keep all your cash in one location while you are shopping.
- Record all credit/debit card numbers in a safe location and track your spending.
- Never leave a purse unattended in a shopping cart.
- While walking in a parking lot, keep your keys in your hand.
- If you are approached by a stranger, press your panic alarm on your key fob to alert others.
- Keep purchases and valuables out of view in your vehicle. This includes purses, cellphones, and packages.
- Remain attentive to your surroundings and call 911 with any suspicious activity.



Keep purchases and valuables out of view in your vehicle this holiday season.

If you will be traveling during the holiday season, the Ridgeland Police Department offers a House Watch Program where we will provide frequent patrols and checks of your residence while you are out of town. Residents are asked to contact RPD Communications Division at 601-856-2121 and request their residence be placed on the House Watch list for extra patrol. In addition, residents can also do some things to protect their property while they are away such as:

- Stop/suspend all mail and newspaper deliveries.
- Have a neighbor use your driveway for parking during your absence.
- Remove your garage door opener from vehicles left at home.
- Make sure gates to the rear of the house are secured and locked.
- Set timers for interior/exterior lights, if available.
- Do not leave garbage containers by the street.
- Be aware of social media activity/posting and 'advertising' you are out of town.
- Leave your blinds and shades in their normal position.

The Ridgeland Police Department Criminal Investigations Division has been promoting a service offered through LeadsOnline which will provide a service to our residents for documenting their valuable property. This FREE service, ReportIt, allows residents to document their valuable property on a secure hosted site by listing a description of the property, individual serial numbers/owner applied numbers, value of the property, and uploading photos of their property. This is an online inventory of a homeowner's valuable property. If any resident is interested in learning more about this service or needs assistance in establishing an account, they are encouraged to contact our Investigations Division at 601-856-5210 and an investigator will be happy to assist you. Residents can obtain more information on this service at <https://reportit.leadsonline.com/>

I wish each and every one of you a safe and happy holiday season. As you enjoy spending time with your family and friends, please remember the men and women of this department as we go about our duties and responsibilities to protect our community.