

SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS



CAPS TIPS

Brought to you by the Chicago Police Department
Your Partners for Safe Neighborhoods

ALLEY SAFETY TIPS

Chicago's system of alleys provides community residents and City departments with convenient garbage pickup and access to off-street parking. Unfortunately, alleys can also provide cover for burglars and other criminals. As part of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) of working with City residents to ensure safer neighborhoods, we offer these "tips" to enhance the security of your neighborhood and home.

√Secure your back door and gate:

Most home burglaries occur when no one is at home. Burglars often enter through the less-visible back door. You can discourage burglars by putting a lock on your back gate, ensuring that your back door has a deadbolt lock and making sure that your back fence, trees or shrubs do not obscure the view of your home. Locks and visibility of entrances are your best defense against crime.

√Secure your garage:

Garages are a great convenience, but they also offer the opportunity for theft and a place to hide. Make your garage safer by installing good lighting at the back and over any side entrances, and secure stored property with a strong lock. An automatic garage door opener makes coming home safer, and light- or motion-sensitive lighting devices ensure that when you leave or come home, you won't be in the dark.

√Light your alley and back yard:

Deny criminals the cover of darkness by adding to your alley light. Make sure that all City-installed lights are working and report bulbs that are out or other problems immediately. You can enhance your security and shed light on suspicious activity by adding lights to your garage, back fence and yard, and passages between your building or garage and those of your neighbors. For maximum efficiency, consider using light- or motion-sensitive lighting.

√Place your address in the back of your property:

If a crime is committed in the back of your property or if a criminal uses your property as an access to an alley, the police may not be able to identify the correct location unless your address is visible. The same is true in cases of fire or medical emergencies. The ability to find the right location quickly can make a difference. You should have your address permanently marked on the back of your property -- on the gate, the fence, or the garage. Don't rely on numbers on your garbage cans or other movable objects. While it makes it easy for you to find them, there is no guarantee they will always be in the right place.

√Don't use alleys as alternatives to streets:

You should not use alleys as shortcuts, especially when alone and at night. Always use the more heavily traveled streets and sidewalks. While some alleys might seem more convenient, don't take the chance of making yourself a victim of crime.

√Keep your alley clean:

Accumulated trash is not only a health and fire hazard, but can also send the signal to residents and criminals that no-one cares about the neighborhood. Keep your trash in the provided containers; dispose of flammable materials correctly; recycle paper, cans, bottles and plastic through the City's recycling programs; notify your ward superintendent when there are large items or excessive trash that needs immediate removal.

City of Chicago
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