

Landscaping and Yard Security

A few alterations to your landscaping can be enough to put off intruders. To avoid getting caught, intruders look for property they can get into and out of quickly. Their ideal target is a house surrounded by large hedges and shrubs, which hamper visibility from the street and neighbors houses.

Bushes, Shrubs and Trees: Trim shrubbery and trees so doors and windows are visible to neighbors, and from the street. Trimmed landscaping should not provide concealment for criminals. If you have a second floor, prune trees so they can't help a thief climb in second floor windows. Place trellises where they can't be used as ladders to gain entry to the upper floors.

- Ground plants (shrubbery and bushes) within four (4) feet of any sidewalks, driveways, doors or gates, should be maintained at a height of not more than two (2) feet.
- Ground plants between four (4) and eight (8) feet of any sidewalks, driveways, doors, or gates, should be maintained at a height of not more than four (4) feet.
- Ground plants under windows should be maintained at a height that is below the window sill.
- Trees should be trimmed so that the lower branches are more than six (6) feet off the ground.

Place large gauge gravel on the ground near windows. The noise caused by intruders walking on it can become a psychological deterrent. **DO NOT** place river rocks or other items near glass windows or doors. You do not want to provide the burglar with his tools!

Plant spiny (thorny) plants along fences and under windows. Such plants will discourage even the most nimble intruder. Protecting with spiny plants is as effective as the use of barbed wire, and a lot more attractive.

Street Numbers

Street numbers should be easily visible from the street. Critical time can be saved by emergency responders when the street address for the house is visible from a distance.

On your house:

- Use numbers made of reflective materials, or black on white, that are 6 inches high.
- Keep numbers new and clean and replace when necessary.
- The numbers should be placed under a light and near the front door or garage entrance.

Your house number should be painted on the curb in front of your driveway:

- Four (4) to six (6) inch high black numbers on a white background is
- most effective.
- It should be centered at the end of your driveway or just to the house side of your driveway.
- If you live along an alley your house number should be painted (as stated above) on the fence outside your alley gate.

Limited or Direct Access to Yards and Store Rooms:

Intruders look for no, or few obstacles blocking quick exits. Fences prevent burglars from carrying away large items if the gates are locked. Gates should be locked at all times, even when your are home!

Ladders and tools should be stored in a garage or storage shed, and these areas should be locked.

Landscaping should also be designed to control access to your property. Proper barriers make the person with criminal intent feel uncomfortable as he or she approaches your home or business