

Safe Seniors: Safety Tips

Seniors are a diverse group with different abilities, lifestyles, budgets, and access to community support. All of whom have a right to feel safe, no matter if they're snow birds who go south for the winter, or homing pigeons who prefer their own nests! What can be done?

When at home, keep your doors and windows locked, preferably with dead-bolt locks. Keep your home well lit at night inside and out, and keep your curtains closed at night. Never open your door to strangers until you are satisfied with their identity and the purpose of their visit. Ask for proper identification and the purpose of the visit from delivery people or strangers. Never give out information over the phone indicating that you are home alone or detailing when you will not be home.

Get to know your neighbors.

Be money-wise!

Get to know your bank manager, or if you're not able to do your own banking assign a power of attorney to someone you trust. Make this person known to your bank manager/ lawyer/ relatives and make sure they read all documents before you sign them. Arrange to have any incoming cheques such as your pension deposited directly into your bank account and set cash withdrawal limits on your account. Never commit yourself to purchases or charitable donations over the phone. Ask the caller to mail you the information. Check with the Consumer Association of Canada or the Better Business Bureau before committing to any transactions.

How do we protect ourselves in public spaces?

Always walk in well-lit areas and report all suspicious activity to the police. If you are driving, always lock your car on entering or leaving it. If your car breaks down obtain assistance by calling CAA or a friend. If you don't have a phone with you, allow someone to make an emergency call on your behalf, but don't get out of your car. If you suspect someone is following you, drive to the nearest public place and get help. Do not park or drive in isolated dark spaces. Keep your gas tank full and your engine properly maintained to avoid breakdowns.

Wise Ottawa is a not-for-profit organization specializing in community safety audits and personal safety workshops. For information on our services or other safety tips, please call our office at: 613-230-6700 or visit our website at: www.wiseottawa.ca.