A significant number of residential burglaries in Yuma County are the result of burglars entering homes through a door or window that was left unlocked while the residents were away. Residential burglary often occurs during the day while you are away at work or when you are away from home for an extended period of time. Burglars run the risk of drawing attention to themselves if they need to spend too much time or make too much noise breaking into your home. Therefore, they will often seek out the “path of least resistance” in a neighborhood when looking for a home to victimize. By making your home more difficult to enter or less attractive to a burglar, you can minimize the risk of being victimized.

In most cases, the precautions you can take to secure your home are simple and inexpensive.

LOCK IT UP!

- Make it a habit to lock your doors and windows when you are leaving your home.
- Secure doors and windows, even when leaving the home for short periods of time.
- Don’t leave property such as bicycles left unsecured in the front yard.

DOORS & WINDOWS

Note: As with all exterior door and window locks, you should always be familiar with escape methods in the event you need to exit the home in an emergency!

- External doors should be made of solid wood or metal. Wooden doors with a hollow core are easily broken into and should only be used within the interior of the home. A metal door with hollow core is okay.
- External doors should be installed with a dead-bolt lock mechanism. A key lock in the door knob is not sufficient and can easily be defeated.
- The screws that hold the strike plate onto the door frame should bore into the wood stud located beyond the door framing. Usually, a 2” wood screw is sufficient.
- All exterior doors should be installed to fit snug in the door frame.
- Many sliding glass doors and windows can be lifted out of their tracks from the outside the house. This can be prevented by installing a “pin” lock. Pin locks are installed by drilling a hole through the sliding door or window frame and into the fixed frame. The pin is then inserted preventing up and down or side to side movement. Pin locks are very inexpensive and are available in most hardware stores.
- Many people place wooden dowels into the bottom of the window or sliding door track. This is effective is preventing side to side movement.
- A peep-hole or wide angle viewer is recommended for the front door of your home.

LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING

- Keeping your yard clean and well maintained can deter burglars. By keeping your property looking good, you send a message that you care about your belongings and have taken precautions to secure them.
- Shrubbery around the home should be kept trimmed around windows and doors. Overgrown shrubs provide hiding spots for burglars while they make entry into your home.
- At night, motion sensing lights are effective in warding off burglars and prowlers.
ADDITIONAL HELPFUL TIPS

While away from home for extended periods, guard against making it obvious you are away. Have a trusted neighbor collect mail or newspapers that may stack up.

- A porch light left on day and night is another signal that you are away.
- Garbage cans left at the curb for extended periods are another tip off to thieves.
- Be careful about who you inform of your travel plans.
- A trusted neighbor to keep an eye out for your home is your best defense against burglary while you are away. NEIGHBORS SHOULD BE ASKED TO ALERT LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OF ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

- You should always have a record of the valuables within you home.
- Property should be marked for identification. This allows the property owner to provide specific information to law enforcement in the event of a loss. This also allows for quick identification if the property is recovered.
- You can purchase property engraving tools at any hardware store.