



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

October Sheriff's Column - Property Owners Can Help Prevent Crimes

Property crimes, suspicious activity, and drug activity continue to be problems no matter where you live across our country. Some communities do a really nice job of making thieves and other criminals uncomfortable, while other communities have room for improvement. This month, I am going to address two topics that we all can improve on to make Dodge County communities safer and less desirable to criminals.

The first topic is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is a set of design principles used to discourage crime and promote building security. The concept is simple: Buildings and properties can be designed to prevent damage from the force of the elements and natural disasters; they should also be designed to prevent crime. Here are a few questions for you to consider with your own property:

1. Is your property well lit, using dusk to dawn or motion lights around your house, garage, and other buildings?
2. Is your property clear of shrubs, bushes, or weeds that criminals can use to hide or lurk in the shadows?
3. Is your property neat, clean, and clear of broken down vehicles making it easy to see if someone is on your property from the street or road?
4. Is your property well secured with quality locks on all doors and windows? Are the locks actually used every day?

The answers to these questions should all be yes. If not, you are increasing your chances of being a crime victim. There are more ways to evaluate the security of your property by reviewing the Home Security Handbook on the Community Programs page of our website, www.dodgecountysheriff.com.

The second thing property owners can do is invest in security cameras. The price of security cameras has decreased significantly and the quality has increased exponentially. For a few hundred dollars, you can purchase a camera system or a doorbell camera. They are great ways to keep an eye on your property even if you are not home. Many systems connect to your home internet and you can view the cameras remotely from anywhere in the world.

We are just less than a month away from Black Friday and Cyber Monday. That would be a great opportunity to check out some of these systems at even greater savings.

If you do invest in a camera system, make sure you install them in locations that are

beneficial, such as aimed at doors and windows. Placing cameras on each side of your house is also a great idea. Finally, having a camera aimed at the driveway or street where license plates and descriptions of vehicles would be ideal.

If you do purchase video cameras and have them installed, it would be great if you would once again go to the sheriff's office website and complete the business/residential information form. It notifies us that you have cameras in the event we need to reach out to ask for surveillance video if a crime occurs in your neighborhood.

By cleaning up our properties, making them well lit and well maintained, we can all work together to make criminals uncomfortable around our homes and businesses. It will keep our neighborhoods safe and secure and give us peace of mind that our families will be less likely to be victimized. It's just one more thing we can all do to keep Dodge County a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and visit.

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt