

Shopping Safely during the Holiday's!

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Shopping Safety Tips during the Holiday Season!

The holiday season is quickly approaching and as we begin to start wrapping up our work for the year and start wrapping gifts, it is essential for you to consider your safety during these times. This article will provide you with holiday safety tips to consider when out shopping this season.

Scams during the holidays

Online shopping is a favourite pastime for many consumers. But many deals you see online—from inexpensive designer purses to significantly discounted electronic goods—are too good to be true. Here's some tips on avoiding scams;

- Buy from companies or individuals you know by reputation or from past experience.
- Never make a deal outside the auction site.
- Beware of sellers from far away or that have limited or no reviews.
- Use a credit card when shopping online; many offer protection and may give you a refund.
- Be wary of websites that contain spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.
- Read the refund and return policies carefully, including the fine print.
- Ask the supplier questions and confirm service delivery timelines and the total cost.

Holiday Scams to Watch Out For

Buying on Kijiji, Facebook Marketplace, or Craigslist

Another common form of purchasing items is through meetup sites like Kijiji or Facebook Marketplace. However, these come with their risks and different considerations that should be made. Consider the following when purchasing from any of these or similar websites.

- Agree on a safe location somewhere populated and during the day. This can be a nearby mall or shopping centre, coffee shop, or your nearby police station.
- Bring a friend or family member to keep you company.
- Inspect the item to confirm it is as pictured and as you wanted.
- If purchasing on Facebook, review the sellers profile. This can alert you to a "burner" or fake account before making a deal.

The following video provides some more information from Peel Police's on Buy and Sell Exchange zones! Check out your local Police website to learn if they have Buy and Sell zones.



Shopping Safety

Shopping in stores

- Do not buy more than you can carry. Plan ahead by taking a friend with you or asking a store employee to help you carry your packages to the car.
- Save all receipts. Print and save all confirmations from your online purchases. Start a file folder to keep all receipts together and to help you verify credit card or bank statements as they come in.
- Don't flash the cash. Consider alternate options to pay for your merchandise, such as onetime or multiuse disposable credit cards or money orders, including at online stores.
- Wait until asked by a cashier before taking out your credit card. A thief would love to shoulder surf to get your account information.
- If you purchase items and put them in your vehicle, do not leave them in plain sight. Consider placing all bought items in your trunk to avoid theft.

With Small Children

- If you are shopping with children, make a plan in case you are separated from each other.
- Make sure your child has a contact number for you. If the children are too small to remember the contact number, pin a copy of the number (or write it) on the inside of their jackets.
- Select a central meeting place. This can be as simple as the Food Court or a store that they may recognize.
- Teach children to know they can ask mall personnel or store security employees if they need help.

Look out for the Home Safety during the Holidays article coming soon!

Your safety matters!

- **Seneca Security**

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