



Crime Prevention Tips

ARAPAHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
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J. Grayson Robinson, SHERIFF

Community
Resource
Unit

Committed to quality service with an emphasis on integrity,
professionalism and community spirit.

“Gypsy and Traveler Scams”

Every spring and summer, the Denver metro area has had an increase in “gypsy and traveler” activity. To law enforcement agencies, the word "gypsy" refers to people who travel in small groups across the country perpetrating crimes of theft, burglary, and fraud. Over the past several summers, residents of Arapahoe County and other communities have been victims of what have become known as "gypsy scams."

Gypsy scams are incidents that occur in daylight hours, in which a suspect will, literally, walk right into someone's home for the purpose of stealing jewelry or money. Very often, the homeowner is either in or near the home. If these individuals are caught, they give some kind of excuse as to why they are in the home or on the property. So far, these individuals have not been violent and usually run from the residence as soon as they are discovered.

The best way to keep these individuals from victimizing you is to simply **keep your home locked**, even when you are working in the yard. Remember, anytime you are outside your home, you cannot possibly see every door that a would-be thief might enter.

During this same time of year, traveling home improvement workers, often called “Travelers or Irish Travelers,” invade communities throughout the metro-area preying upon unsuspecting homeowners, often times the elderly, going door to door offering to pave or seal driveways at a very cheap price.

The Travelers will want payment up front and prefer cash but will often times accept a check. The Travelers will tell the homeowners they have patch left over from a previous job. Most homeowners who hire the traveling workers experience shoddy work with substandard materials. Then the victim can't locate the workers for a refund or to repair the job. When victims try to stop payment on the check, it already has been cashed, and the name on the check usually is fictitious or belongs to an uninvolved third party.

Homeowners should be suspicious of anyone who knocks on their doors with offers that sound “too good to be true”. Homeowners should at least always check references and go through the Better Business Bureau to check out the company. Finally, never pay for work in advance; always pay at the conclusion of the job. Remember, if a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

If you have any questions, contact Deputy Amir Stephen at (720) 874-3752, e-mail astephen@co.arapahoe.co.us, or contact Deputy Brian McKnight at (720) 874-3750, e-mail bmcknight@co.arapahoe.co.us.

**To report a crime, call the
Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office at
(303)-795-4711 or 911 for emergencies**