



**HOME SAFETY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**  
*(to be left with resident)*



Prepared for \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by \_\_\_\_\_



Mark Y or N in each box

*Section One: Visibility, Lighting, and Securing*

Are any of your valuables visible from the street?

Residential burglaries account for nearly 75 percent of all break-ins in America. If you can see valuables inside your home from the street, so can a burglar. Burglars are notorious for “window shopping” so Bayside Police encourages you to keep valuables, like cash, jewelry, electronics, and guns, out of view.

Are your doors and windows visible from the street or from a neighbor’s view?

Burglars are always looking for ways to get into your home without being seen. Overgrown shrubs give them the concealment they want to break into your home without the neighbors noticing. Keep shrubs trimmed and be sure to use the yard signs and window decals provided by your home security company to alert potential burglars that your home has help being protected.

Are your doors made of either solid wood or metal clad?

Nearly one third of burglars enter a home through the front door. An old wooden door or a hollow one can be kicked in within seconds. Help beef up your home’s security by installing a windowless solid wood or metal clad door, which includes any connecting door to the garage.

Are your entryways and pathways well-lit at night?

A dark entrance or pathway is not only a safety hazard, but also like rolling out the welcome mat for a burglar. Bayside Police encourages you to use pathway lighting and motion lighting to illuminate your home's exterior. Some alarm monitoring providers even offer apps that let you control your home's lighting from your smartphone. [IS YOUR EXTERIOR WELL LIT?](#)

Do you have motion-sensor lights installed?

The last thing a burglar wants is the spotlight. Incorporate motion-sensor lighting into your home security plan and you'll send a strong signal to burglars that you take protecting your home seriously. In addition to securing the perimeter of your home, Bayside Police advise also using motion-sensor lighting to secure sheds and garages.

Do you have timers on your lights?

Daytime burglaries account for nearly 40 percent of all break-ins, but a dark house is practically begging for a break-in. Inexpensive, easy to install, and simple to operate, there's no reason why you shouldn't have timers on your lights to make your home look occupied while you're out and about. Alternatively, many home security companies offer apps that let you turn lights on and off right from your smartphone.

Do you have all your mail held at the post office when you travel?

There are certain things a burglar looks for when he's casing a neighborhood; an overflowing mailbox is one of them. Have your mail held at the post office if you're travelling for an extended period. An alternative is to have a trusted neighbor/relative pick the mail up for you.

Do you have any yard signs or window decals that state your home is monitored?

Be sure to display the yard and window decals that your home security company provides you with. Bayside Police recommend placing these decals on the windows that face the side and rear of your home, as well as in the front, because 50 percent of the time a burglar enters the home via a window or back door.

Do you have keyed deadbolt locks installed on all your doors?

A burglary occurs roughly every 20 seconds in the U.S., outfitting your home's front and back door with a hardened steel bolt is your first line of defense against a burglar because it makes the door much more difficult to kick in.

Do you have secondary locks on sliding glass doors, or do you secure the door with a dowel on the inside track?

Burglars love sliding doors, especially during the summer when they're often left unlocked or open. You should know July and August are the two hottest months for break-ins, so be sure your sliding doors are locked, and outfitted with a secondary locking mechanism or dowel to provide additional security.

Do you have secondary locks on your windows?

Windows account for a quarter of all break-in entry points. That's because they are frequently left unlocked or outfitted with cheap window locks make them vulnerable to attack. Make it difficult for anyone to get in with help from secondary locks and window sensors.

Do you keep your valuables stored in a safety deposit box or safe?

To keep your valuables safe, your best option is to keep them somewhere difficult for potential burglars to reach, such as a safety deposit box or a safe. Both can only be opened with a key or combination, so intruders can't easily access them.

Do you leave a house key under your door mat?

Under the door mat is often one of the first hiding places a burglar will check for keys. Your best bet is to install a lock box for keys (similar to what a realtor uses). Lock boxes can be picked up at any local hardware store and easily installed to a solid wood frame. Use a unique password. The Police Department can also keep the lock box passcode in its database if you forget the code!

Do you lock the gate(s) to your backyard?

About 30 percent of all burglaries occur when a door or window is left open or unlocked, including those in the backyard. Keep the gates to your backyard locked, especially at night and when you are not at home, to help keep chances of burglary to a minimum.

Do you lock up your grills, lawn mowers, bikes, or other outdoor valuables?

Any valuable property that is kept outdoors should be locked up when not in use to keep it from being easily accessible for burglars. If you can put it out of sight and lock it up, that's even more ideal.

Do you lock all doors at night and every time you leave the house, even if it's just for a few minutes?

It doesn't take long for a burglar to break into your home, especially if a door is left unlocked. Even if you're only leaving home for a moment, it's important to always lock the door behind you. The same goes for locking the doors at night. Even if you're home, the doors should be locked.

Do your doors fit tight in their frames?

While an unlocked door is the most common entry point for a burglar, a flimsy door is another common way to break-in. If your doors do not fit tightly, you should install weather stripping around them to better hold them in place.

Does your neighborhood have a "watch program"?

A good quality neighborhood watch program is to have a focus on educating neighbors on how to actively look out for one another to prevent or lessen crimes in their area. Burglaries decreased more than 30 percent nationwide throughout the 1990s, thanks to neighborhood watch programs.

Have all your doors been rekeyed since you moved in?

If your home or apartment were owned by someone before you, they (or whoever they gave keys to) could still potentially have a key that can unlock your doors. It's best to rekey your home—which is easier than changing out all the locks—so only you have all the copies of the key to your home.

Have there been any break-ins in the neighborhood recently?

If a house in your neighborhood has been broken into, you need to be on higher alert about your own home security. You could face an increased risk of burglary, as burglars may return to the area of a successful break-in and target similar homes nearby.

Have you secured any mail slots, dryer vents, or pet entrances that a trespasser could use to vandalize your home?

Even if you keep all your doors and windows locked, vandals can still attempt to harm your interior by expelling sprays or tossing other harmful materials.

Do you have a company that monitors your home alarm system?

Home security providers can offer 24/7 monitoring of your home and can notify you of emergencies in your home, including fire, carbon monoxide, or a burglary, wherever you are. You'll also have a trained monitoring specialist on the line ready to help you contact the authorities if necessary. Compare alarm monitoring providers to find the right one for you.

Do you have surveillance cameras?

Nine out of ten convicted burglars say they'd avoid targeting a home with video surveillance. If you're looking to take your home security to the next level, surveillance cameras can be a strong addition to any home security strategy.

Do you store your ladders and tools in a locked garage or shed?

Don't give would-be burglars the tools they need to break into your house. Make sure tools, ladders, and any other equipment they could utilize is kept locked away.

Have you installed a home security system?

Homes without security systems are more likely to be burglarized than those with a security system. 60% of convicted burglars say the presence of an alarm would cause them to seek a different home to burglarize. Bayside Police recommends reading reviews and comparing security providers to decide which one is right for you.

If you park your vehicle outside, is it locked?

Lock your doors and roll up the windows – suspects often look for unlocked cars, especially in poor weather when there are fewer people out of doors to notice suspicious activity. Turn off your car! **Never leave the car running or left unattended; take the keys out of the ignition.** Take your valuables – don't leave anything of value in the vehicle or in plain sight. Even a cupholder can attract a thief. It is important to keep personal documents, checkbooks, and driver's licenses in your possession at all times. Don't leave gifts in the car. Keep things out of sight. If you have an alarm, don't forget to activate it.

If you park your vehicle inside, do you remove the keys?

For homes with garages that are attached to the house, remember that you probably have a garage door opener in the car. If you park your car in the garage, you should still lock it and take the keys inside. That way, if a burglar enters your garage, they do not have an easy opportunity to steal your vehicle.

## Section Two: Protecting Yourself

### Is your house number clearly visible from the street?

When an emergency strikes, every second counts. Make sure that police, firefighters, and/or paramedics can quickly find the right house by keeping your house numbers visible. Bayside Police advise checking your house numbers quarterly to ensure they haven't faded or been obstructed by vegetation. Be sure the house numbers AND mailbox numbers are reflectorized.

### Can you see who's at the door without opening it?

Opening the door to your home without knowing who's on the other side can be frightening and dangerous. Bayside Police urge homeowners to select a quality door that's equipped with a peep hole. Police also suggest a live-feed doorbell cameras that can be hardwired and give you immediate updates of what is happening outside your home. You can even speak through them even if you're not there or set off the audible alarm that most are equipped with.

### Do you have a cell phone in case emergencies?

Even if you don't use a cell phone as your primary means of communication, having one handy is a good safety and security precaution. Some thieves will cut phone lines before they enter the home, so having a charged cell phone to call for help can benefit you.

### Do you have an emergency escape plan in case of break-in?

A burglar trying to break-in is a homeowner's worst nightmare. Bayside Police believes you can never be too prepared for the unthinkable, so establish and practice an emergency escape plan with your family once or twice a year to make sure everyone is prepared in the case of a break-in.

### Do you have working carbon monoxide and smoke detectors?

Each year, more than 150 people die from non-fire related carbon monoxide poisoning. Bayside Police recommends installing carbon monoxide detectors and test them regularly (once a month) to make sure you're protected against this invisible danger. Three out of five house fire deaths occur in households without working smoke alarms. Make sure to check batteries and test your smoke detector regularly (at least twice a year). Remember to replace them completely as recommended.

### Do you have fire extinguishers easily accessible throughout your home?

On average, home structure fires are reported every 85 seconds in America. If a fire were to break out in your home right now, is your fire extinguisher easily accessible and functional? In addition to fire extinguishers, Bayside Police suggests adding smoke, fire, and carbon monoxide monitoring to your home security plan so your family will be alerted the moment trouble is detected.

Do you know your neighbors across the street and on all sides of your home?

Good neighbors look out for each other and share any suspicious activity they've noticed around other homes, particularly when someone is out of town or at the office. Knowing your neighbors is crucial for maintaining a sense of security in your area.

Do you keep an inventory of your personal property in case of theft?

In the event of a burglary, you don't want to forget to include any stolen property on a report for the police or an insurance claim. Keeping an inventory of your personal property helps ensure you are compensated for all losses. Be sure to record serial numbers along with manufacturer information.

Do you keep medications out of sight?

Keeping medications out of sight means helping keep them out of the hands of burglars who could use your meds themselves or sell them on the street. Keeping your medicines off the counter helps reduce the temptation.

Do you shred documents with personal information before disposing them?

Even if it's something like unwanted junk mail, you should always shred any document that may have personal information on it before throwing it in your trash can. This can help you ensure your personal identity is less at risk for being stolen. Police suggest separating shredded documents in individual bags so that a criminal cannot easily re-assemble them.

Do you use a virtual server (cloud) to store important documents?

Virtual storage is inexpensive and very reliable. You can access your important information anytime and from anywhere.

Do you use a password generator?

A random password generator is a software program, hardware device, or online tool that automatically generates a password using parameters that a user sets, including mixed-case letters, numbers, symbols, pronounceability, length, and strength – these passwords are very difficult to crack. Don't reuse the same passwords!

## What is the myBlue Program?



Before suburban life became mobile and disconnected, police officers and residents knew each other by name and worked together to protect their community. Trying to recapture that, we

have introduced *myBlue*.

*myBlue* is that tailored delivery of individualized police services, non-urgent advice, resources, or one-on-one communications that are offered to small sections of the Village. It's that missing piece that describes how the Police Department will deliver tailored services to small neighborhoods.

Just as with the old-world "cop on the beat" who walked a small area of his city and learned the nuances of his patrol area, so too will the Bayside officer. It's all about personal contact.

- ✓ *myBlue* is all about a personal touch where a call for advice, information, guidance, or providing resource or direction is needed.
- ✓ *myBlue* does not replace urgent responses.
- ✓ *myBlue* puts officers in closer contact with residents and businesses

9-1-1 is still the best way in an emergency or urgent need for the police or fire department.

**If it's urgent - call 414-351-9900 or dial 9-1-1**

The program effort is to have each officer introduce himself/herself and explain the program to every resident in the sector, either in person or by mail or email. Sector Officers may conduct "mobile meetings" at a host home to generate two-way

communications and help them understand their sector through the eyes of the residents.

## It is all about community...

Sector Officers want to create a network of neighbors to enhance community communication and share resources as well as concerns. Networks may already exist, but if not, the task is to create one that provides solid, two-way communication. Small group neighborhood meetings will give way to block parties, picnics, and meaningful connection of the police to the neighbors and neighbors to neighbors.

Sector officers will bring an added personal touch to public safety and amplify the trust that Bayside residents already have in their public safety providers. Better reporting of concerns after being connected to their Sector Officer mean lowered crime, lowered fear of crime, and an enhanced lifestyle.

## Here's how it works...

The Village is divided into eight sectors. Eight police officers have selected their own sector with which they will become familiar.

The officers will essentially be the "Police Chief" of that sector and will reach out to meet the families, couples, or individuals to get acquainted. They will be most interested in opinions and points of view about neighborhood issues and needs, neighborhood behaviors, Village service, and any unspoken fear of crime or threats to lifestyles.

