



## Home Safety Tips

# Arm yourself against the threat of a home invasion

(NC)—In 2005, Statistics Canada reported that there were approximately 130,000 break and enters reported to police in Canada. However, some of these crimes remained unreported. Property crime losses ranged from little or nothing of value to materials costing hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Unfortunately, burglars can do much more than steal your possessions. They can commit rape, robbery, and assault if they are surprised by someone coming home or target a home that is occupied.

Recent high-profile incidents of 'home invasion' have received significant exposure in the media, particularly those where the elderly have been targeted. Nearly three times as many victims in home invasions were elderly compared to other types of robberies. Home invaders also seem to make a point of hurting their vulnerable victims. The impact of home invasions extends beyond the violence of the crime itself to a long-term loss of the victim's sense of safety at home.

"If you have been a victim of a burglary, chances are that you will be vulnerable to a burglary a second time," explained Patrice De Luca, V.P. of Marketing and Business Development for Reliance Protectron Security Services. "The burglar will know how easy it was the first time they targeted your home. This experience will forever change your life. However, for a small amount of time and money you can make your home more secure and reduce your chances of being a victim."

According to De Luca, many burglars will spend no longer than 60 seconds trying to break into a home. That's why good

locks and good neighbors who watch out for each other are big deterrents to burglars.

De Luca also suggests these following tips:

- Thieves don't like bright lights. Install outside lights and keep them on at night.
- Keep your yard clean. Prune back shrubbery so it doesn't hide doors or windows. Cut back tree limbs that a thief could use to climb to an upper-level window.
- If you travel, create the illusion that you're at home by getting some timers that will turn lights on and off in different areas of your house throughout the evening. Lights burning 24 hours a day signal an empty house.
- Leave shades, blinds, and curtains in normal positions. Don't let your mail pile up, call the post office to stop delivery or have a neighbor pick it up.
- Security systems can be a good investment, especially if you have many valuables in your home, or live in an isolated area or one with a history of break-ins.
- Security systems are an effective deterrent. Nine out of ten convicted burglars agree they'd avoid a house protected by a security system.
- Security system decals and signs are also an effective deterrent.
- Make sure your security system includes a loud inside alarm, detectors at all exterior doors, and motion sensors in the master bedroom and main living areas. More information on home security is available at [www.protectron.com](http://www.protectron.com).

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