

Home Security Checklist:

The following offers you some strategic ideas to protect your home and family:

Fire Safety Windows:

You can find locks for your specific window types at your local hardware, home improvement or lock and key center. Don't forget about basement and garage windows.

Lighting:

Good outdoor lighting will deter an intruder. Motion sensitive lights that turn on when someone passes by if your don't want to leave outdoor lights on all night. Also keep shrubs and trees trimmed to reduce "hiding places."

Alarm systems:

Consider installing an audible alarm system and one that is monitored by a security company. A wonderful alarm system might include a barking dog. Get a copy of "Keeping Your Home Safe," a Life Advice TM pamphlet produced by the MetLife Consumer Education Center with assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, the National Fire Protection Association, Meredith Custom

Publishing or check Barnesandnoble.com. You can receive this and other helpful government brochures through the Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, CO 81009, or by calling them at 719/948-4000 or via the Internet at (<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov>.)

Smoke detectors:

Experts recommend testing your smoke detector monthly and changing the battery twice a year, with the fall and springtime changes.

Fire extinguishers:

Set fire extinguishers in key locations for easy access, such as the kitchen. Be sure they are fully charged and within the expiration date. Be sure you and your family know how to use them.

Heating systems and fireplaces:

Clean and check your furnace and chimney annually. Replace furnace filters regularly. Be sure the fireplace damper is working properly and the screens and doors of the home are properly installed. Keep flammable objects and products away from all heat sources!

Electrical:

Never overloaded extension cords or outlets. Never leave electrical cords under rugs or furniture. Be sure ALL wiring is up to code. Get surge protectors on air conditioners, entertainment equipment and computers. Contact a licensed Electrician.

Family Escape Plan:

Develop a plan where each room has at least two exits (usually a door and window).

Multi-story homes should have easily accessible chain ladders for escape from upper stories.

Teach your children how to "stop, drop and roll." Everyone should practice regular fire drills.

Crime Prevention.

Exterior doors Invest in a top quality door and frame about the fire ratings. Solid doors are much stronger the hollow doors. Install a "privacy peep hole" in solid doors. Be sure your garage doors closed and locked even when you're home.

Deadbolt locks:

Best used on ALL exterior doors and be sure to have a hidden key that you and the family know how to get in case of emergencies. Close friends and family should know where the extra keys are kept! Double-cylinder deadbolts are best for doors with a glass pane. A double-cylinder deadbolt requires the use of a key on both the inside and outside of the lock. Keep the inside key near the door for easy escape during an emergency, not in the lock where an intruder can reach it!