



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Lt. Scott Moskowitz
smokowitz@purcellvilleva.gov

PACKAGE THEFT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION TIPS

PURCELLVILLE, Va., December 10, 2020 - With the holiday season upon us, many people are shopping online and receiving an increased number of package deliveries. Therefore, the Purcellville Police Department would like to remind residents to be aware of possible package thefts and provide some prevention tips. Most thieves are on the hunt for easy targets, and might just notice an attractive package and try to snatch it. Thieves are also known to trail delivery services and take packages immediately after the delivery service has driven away. Here are a few ways to ensure your packages aren't the most appealing to try and take.

Package Theft Protection Basics

- **Have your packages delivered elsewhere to a secure location**, such as your place of employment, an Amazon delivery site and/or Amazon locker, P.O. Box, or FedEx/UPS location.
- **Give special instructions to the package delivery service.** Some services let you indicate where to leave your package if you're not home. UPS and FedEx have tools that allow you to instruct drivers to leave the package at a more discrete location such as a back door or behind landscape, where it is less visible, in a coded lockbox, or with neighbors.
- **Work with your neighbors.** See if you can have a neighbor pick up your packages for you, or be ready if you instruct the delivery service to deliver to their house instead.
- **Schedule packages to arrive when you are home.** If there are days or certain times you are home, try to submit your order so they arrive on days you are home, and can immediately bring packages into your house. This keeps packages from sitting unattended for long periods of time. You can also look into apps that allow you to delay or re-route your packages directly such as through FedEx, UPS or USPS, but be aware, some apps do carry a fee.
- **Hold package for pick up instead.** See if the post office or the store the item is being shipped from can hold the package for direct pick up. The post office will allow your package to remain safe and secure for up to 30 days.
- **Request that deliveries require a signature.** With carriers like FedEx or UPS, you can often set this preference using your customer account, even if the package is

already on its way. In other cases, such as USPS deliveries, you will need to arrange for a signature ahead of time.

- **Subscribe to delivery alerts.** All of the major delivery services offer some kind of notification service for package updates, either via text or email. Many will send a picture of exactly what was delivered and where it was placed. Just remember to sign up for the option to receive the most up-to-date information available.
- **Keep the area around your front porch clear and visible.** Thieves want to be able to get to and from your doorstep undetected. When they're likely to be seen, they're less likely to try and take something in plain view.
- **Request nondescript packaging.** When possible, ask senders not to announce where the package is coming from, especially if it's from a high-end store. Sometimes this is possible through requesting a gift shipping option. Check the box labeled "Gift" to better ensure your package comes in a plain box.

Tools for Secure Packages

- **Package lockboxes.** These can be installed near or in conjunction with your mailbox, or near your home. Some styles come with anchoring hardware to bolt it to the porch. While even a non-locking parcel box prevents theft by concealing your deliveries from the street, choose a lockable container for maximum security.
- **Outdoor security cameras.** Another theft deterrent are cameras. Have your outdoor security cameras highly visible and clearly pointed at the package drop-off area.
- **Video doorbells.** Video doorbells are lower profile than security cameras, but can serve as a theft deterrent. They have benefits such as motion activation, easy installation, multifunctional features, and a unique vantage point that's more likely to catch a thief's identity than an overhead camera, which can provide evidentiary material to law enforcement.

Not any one measure can fully prevent package theft, but hopefully a combination of several of the above steps can greatly reduce your chance of a thief stealing your packages. For emergencies please call 911, but if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Purcellville Police Department's non-emergency number at 540-338-7422.

The Town of Purcellville, Virginia

"Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper," is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12th year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to Purcellville, the Town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiquing, equestrian activities, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at www.purcellvilleva.gov.

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