

Greetings,

As we move closer to Christmas I wanted to provide good information for you to share with our members, as it relates to cyber security and package theft.

To enhance personal cyber security while operating on line during the holiday season, as well as securing your home connected to the internet. The attached flyer provides simple steps to protect yourself.

In Preventing Package Theft- below are several good tips:

1. Consider granting Amazon inside access. If you're an Amazon Prime member in select areas, you can sign up for Key by Amazon, a service in which you authorize an Amazon delivery driver to access your home.

Prepandemic, that meant the driver could leave your package in your home, garage, or car. The COVID-19 outbreak led Amazon to pause its in-home and in-car delivery services but still leave packages in your garage.

For in-garage delivery, you'll need a Smart Garage Hub, Pair this internet-connected device with your garage door motor to allow the Amazon courier to open and close your garage door (via a smartphone) for the delivery.

It also allows you to control your garage door from the Key by Amazon smartphone app. For added peace of mind, you can also connect a video doorbell or security camera, to capture video footage of the delivery.

To see whether Key by Amazon delivery is available in your area, go to the Key by Amazon in-garage delivery or in-gate delivery webpage.

2. Monitor the front porch with a security cam or video doorbell. With a camera keeping watch, you can monitor your property from anywhere and record any activity. Some cameras, can even detect the presence of packages, and if the cameras are visible, that alone might deter potential thieves.
3. Give the delivery service special instructions. Some services let you indicate where to leave your package if you're not home.

Using UPS' My Choice tool, FedEx's Delivery Manager, and USPS Informed Delivery, you can instruct drivers to leave a package at a back door, with a building superintendent, or in a coded lockbox.

FedEx and UPS also allow you to have deliveries diverted to another address (maybe your neighbor's), placed on hold if you're on vacation, or rescheduled for a different day. Both even have local partner merchants, such as FedEx and UPS stores, pharmacies, and grocery stores, that have agreed to accept deliveries on their customers' behalf.

Another option is to have items sent to a retailer's walk-in store for pickup, which may help you save on shipping fees.

4. Use a lockbox or an Amazon Locker. Instead of having deliveries left unsecured at your front door, you can have them delivered into a lockbox on your property.

lockboxes can be opened using an access code you give to the delivery person. The box locks automatically after something is placed inside. (You can change the code after the delivery.)

Another approach: Purchases made on Amazon.com can be delivered to an Amazon Locker—there are more than 2,800 of them in about 70 cities and towns, including at some Whole Foods markets.

When you check out on Amazon, put a locker location as the delivery address. Once your package is delivered, you'll receive an email with a six-digit code to your locker, and you'll have three days to pick it up. There is no charge for this service.

Just keep in mind that, depending on where the locker is located at the business, you might have to wait in line to get inside because of COVID-19-related occupancy limits.

5. Keep tabs on your packages by signing up for alerts. FedEx Delivery Manager, UPS My Choice, and USPS Informed Delivery all offer text, email, and/or mobile app alerts so that you know when a delivery will be made and can adjust your own schedule accordingly.

USPS Informed Delivery takes these alerts a step further and lets you digitally preview images of your mail and its location without entering tracking numbers. That way you can be sure to be at home if something important is arriving.

6. Require a signature. This way, packages aren't simply dropped off outside your house. But, of course, you have to be home and available to receive the package—and you're coming into contact with the courier.

Figuring Out If Your Package Was Stolen

If your package goes missing, take these steps.

Verify that the package was delivered. Call the shipping company to confirm that the item was left at your place and wasn't taken on your behalf by someone, such as a well-meaning neighbor or building superintendent. If the package or its contents were stolen or otherwise lost while in

the shipping company's possession, you may be entitled to compensation. Most packages sent by UPS, for instance, are automatically covered for up to \$100 in case of loss or damage.

Check your security cameras. If you have a security camera or video doorbell, review the footage to see if your package was delivered and whether it was stolen.

What to Do If Your Package Is Stolen

Contact the retailer. Retailers have different policies on how to handle theft of packages. Some, such as Target, have fine-print clauses saying the risk of loss passes to the buyer when the purchase is delivered to the shipping company. Still, it doesn't hurt to ask.

Contact the shipping company. Shippers often require the sender, not the recipient, to initiate a claim. If the retailer won't cooperate, contact the shipper as soon as possible. You have a limited number of days to file a claim.

Check your credit card benefits. Many credit cards have purchase protection that covers lost or stolen items. If your purchase was made with a credit card, you can make a claim with the issuer. If that doesn't work, request a chargeback from your credit card company.

Check your insurance. As a last resort, you may be able to collect from your homeowners or renters insurance. But those policies usually have deductibles of \$500 to \$1,000 or more, so depending on the value of the contents in the package, your insurance might not be helpful.

Consider involving the police. For a small purchase, you might not want to do this, but you might need a police report if you're making a claim with a retailer, a shipper, a credit card company, or an insurance company.

Thank you, for your on-going support of the off-duty APD Officers who continue to patrol the neighborhood, check on houses, etc. during this very challenging year.

Captain Jeff Baxter
Atlanta Police Department