

## **Always keep inventory of your possessions updated**

As a security consultant, covering all aspects of home and business security is my business. Unfortunately, dealing with victims of break and enters is not my favourite part.

However, I usually turn a negative into a positive by learning from each experience.

One of the things that I have learned over the years is to document possessions and serial numbers for insurance or theft recovery. Making or upgrading a home or business inventory list is something that quite often finds itself on the back burner until it's too late.

Sadly, we must expect the unexpected and start those inventory lists right now, making sure to document all pertinent information like serial numbers and receipts.

Don't think because you have an alarm system that you are exempt from taking an inventory list.

With a break-in happening about every 14 seconds in Canada, unfortunately we must be prepared.

The unwelcome visitor usually spends less than five minutes, and seems to know exactly what he wants to fulfill his shopping list.

Creating an inventory file is really quite simple. The three main ingredients you will need is a digital or VHS video camera, a camera and an inventory book which will contain every item that you own and, if available, serial numbers or other identifying marks. Receipts can also be kept in your notebook.

Now you're ready to start your walk through, beginning with the exterior of the house or business, making sure to video the grounds, taking in any special yard or architectural enhancements. Once the outside is complete, it's time to move indoors.

Starting with the front door entry, make sure to film each room separately and completely. Also be sure to film inside all your cabinets, closets, china hutches and buffets. Include collectibles like stamp and coin collections and even musical

instruments. Make sure that you film any identifiable marks which could help police locate your property. Marks like artists a signature, engraving on jewellery or even scrapes and scratches.

Use your inventory list as a cross reference to make sure you have not missed anything. This information will help you and the police identify your possessions and provide proof of ownership.

When you get your single photos developed, ask for double prints so you can supply the insurance company and the police department with a set.

When you have completed your inventory file, store it in a safety deposit box or a fire-rated burglar safe on your premise.

Don't get caught by not taking action with your inventory list. It could save you thousands of dollars in the event of a break and enter.

If the unexpected does come calling, you will be ready to supply the insurance company and the police department with the information they require.

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