

## Shopping safety tips

It's a busy time of year for the police as they see an increase in calls leading up to the Christmas holidays.

The Ontario Provincial Police would like to remind everyone to do their part in making this holiday season a safe and happy one for all.

Unfortunately there are some people who see opportunity at this time of year, and will use it to their advantage.

Here are a few simple tips:

? Whenever possible, use banking machines that are in visible and active areas. If you have to use a bank machine after hours, have a look around, be aware of your surroundings and be prepared; have your card ready to do business.

? Always lock your vehicle whether it is in your driveway or at a parking lot and keep valuables and purchases out of sight or in the trunk. This will reduce the risk of theft from your vehicle.

? Think about where you are parking. Is it in a well-lit area? You may be returning to your vehicle when it is dark. Have your key ready in your hand as you approach your vehicle.

? Ladies, when shopping, don't leave your purse in the cart unattended. You may have your back turned to your cart picking an item off the shelf; someone may be picking your wallet or purse out of your cart. It happens very quickly and you may not notice until you are at the check-out when you reach in your purse for your wallet and it's not there.

? If your Christmas tree is visible from the outside, consider placing most of the presents under the tree at the last minute. Once gifts have been unwrapped, be aware of the packaging that you are putting out to the curb. Anyone paying attention will know what new items you have such as electronics etc.