

Tips from OPP on how to keep 'porch pirates' at bay this holiday season

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Ordering a package online can be risky if left at the recipient's front door unattended.

Individuals who steal these packages, commonly referred to as 'porch pirates,' prey upon people who order items online, which arrive at their house while they're not home.

There's always an uptick in incidents of porch pirates stealing packages around the holidays, as people order more items as gifts online.

To help combat this issue, the Central Region of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) recently shared some tips to keep porch pirates at bay this festive season.

'With the busy shopping season here, parcels will be arriving fast and furious to front porches everywhere. Criminals know this as well,' said Central Region OPP in a press release. 'Thieves steal packages when no one is at home to accept the parcel.'

To avoid or reduce the odds of a theft occurring, the OPP recommend requesting a signature on delivery or shipping packages to a trusted neighbour or relative who will be home.

Having packages delivered to a workplace, if allowed by the employer, also helps to reduce the odds of theft.

'Track your deliveries online so you know when they're slated to arrive and plan to be home upon delivery,' said Central Region OPP.

Installing video cameras and posting signage to indicate surveillance is in effect can be helpful as well.

Requesting that a package be left out of sight at a rear or side door is another way to reduce risk.

Avoiding the shipping of packages altogether and opting for in-store or curb-side pickup wherever possible can ensure theft won't occur.

Central Region OPP says if packages are stolen from your home, report the incident to your local police and the shipping company.

Anyone who sees suspicious activity in their neighbourhood should contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).