



Fire,
Security,
Electronic
Surveillance

"QUALITY AND PEACE OF MIND SINCE 1969"

(410) 766-8336

THE ADVISOR

*A Quarterly Security Guide Especially
Prepared for the Clients and Friends of A.A.S.C.O.*

Post Office Box 159 • Pasadena, MD 21123-0159 • www.okaasco.com

Self-Protection Begins At Your Front Door

Fact: Your security system makes your home 33% less likely to be burglarized.

Fact: Too many security system owners don't use their systems regularly.

It's been our experience that two things lead to infrequent alarm usage. The first is apprehension about not arming, or disarming, the system properly within the given time limits. This could mean that we haven't done our job properly. Every member of your household should understand how to arm and disarm your system without any apprehension. If, for whatever reason, they don't, give us a call and we'll be happy to give them an easy to understand training session.

The second most common reason for not using an installed security system is the belief that, "I'm only going to be gone for a couple



of minutes!" This can be a potentially dangerous mistake. When you come home and disarm your system—even after just a short absence—you know with certainty there's no one in your home who shouldn't be there.

Burglars are opportunistic and quick. The average burglary takes just a few minutes and the average burglar gains access through a ground-level door or window that is either unlocked or unprotected. If you are only gone for a few minutes, you could possibly return home to find yourself in the middle of a burglary attempt.

We recommend that you lock all of your doors and windows and arm your security system every time you leave your home. It's the best way to make certain that your protection begins at the front door. ❖

I'm Watching You



No one really wants to be the target of someone else's obsession. Unfortunately, there's no way to predict who will become the focal point of obsessive-compulsive behavior, but there are ways to recognize the signals of such behavior, such as: A level of persistence that is inappropriate. A disturbing attachment to mementos, photos, etc. Behavior that is unpredictably intrusive, violent or abusive. And, behavior that is inappropriately possessive.

Any of these are signals that should not be ignored. They can indicate that you may be dealing with a person capable of becoming a dangerous stalker.

What can you do to protect yourself if you suspect you are being stalked? First, contact local law enforcement and ask for

a restraining order. Second, make certain that the harassment allegations are officially noted in police records. Third, keep detailed records of all incidents and tape-record, videotape or photograph encounters. Lastly, inform your family members, friends, neighbors and co-workers not to give out personal information about you to anyone—and, if you're employed, tell building security about your situation and provide them with a photo or description of the individual who is stalking you.

At home, make certain your security system is always armed. Try to vary your daily routine and don't go out walking alone. It's a good idea to get a second phone number—one that is unlisted in any directory and will not be disclosed by the phone company. Keep your original phone number and use an answering machine to screen and record calls. Give your new number only to trusted family and friends. ❖

What's Inside:

- ◆ A New Perspective On Danger
- ◆ Summertime Is Scam Time
- ◆ Emergency Survival Basics
- ◆ ATMs Are Crime Magnets



Fire,
Security,
Electronic
Surveillance

"QUALITY AND PEACE OF MIND SINCE 1969"

(410) 766-8336

THE ADVISOR

A Quarterly Security Guide for the Clients and Friends of A.A.S.C.O.

SUMMERTIME IS SCAM TIME

The primary goal of scam artists is to separate you from your money by whatever means possible.

The con games range from home renovation activities involving paving, painting, and roofing to sophisticated bank examiner, check forgery and home health aide scams—where their elderly victims hire them to provide in-home health care services, which they do, but they also help themselves to any valuables that are lying around.

To protect yourself, or your elderly relatives, against scam artists you need to be alert and skeptical. Before you consider hiring for services to be provided by a stranger, ask yourself these two important questions:

1. Does the individual giving me this information have something to gain by lying to me?
2. If I trust this person—and things go wrong—will it have a drastic impact?

If you answer *yes* to either of these questions, you need to invest more time investigating the person making the offer, as well as the validity of the offer itself. You can almost assume you're involved in a *SCAM-IN-PROGRESS* if any of these warning signs are present:

- You have to decide right now.
- You are required to hand over a large amount of up-front money for supplies.
- You are quoted a price when the individual hasn't even seen the work site.
- You have won a prize in a contest you don't remember entering.
- You are asked to support your police, fire or other local organization by donating cash in exchange for a token gift, such as a bumper sticker, flag decal or pen.

Scam artists rely on the fact that you'll accept what they say as truth because, in most instances, they don't look at all like criminals. If you have any doubts, always call your local law enforcement agency, or local business bureau, **BEFORE** you hand-over any cash. ❖



A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON DANGER

Misfortune and peril lurk everywhere. According to the daily headlines, we are in "danger" everywhere and from "everything"—from fatty-foods to the air we breathe to random hazards around every corner.

For example, poisonous seafood made headlines not long ago, but the chance of dying from seafood is 1 in 5 million. You have a lot better chance of dying in a rock climbing accident (1 in 20,000).

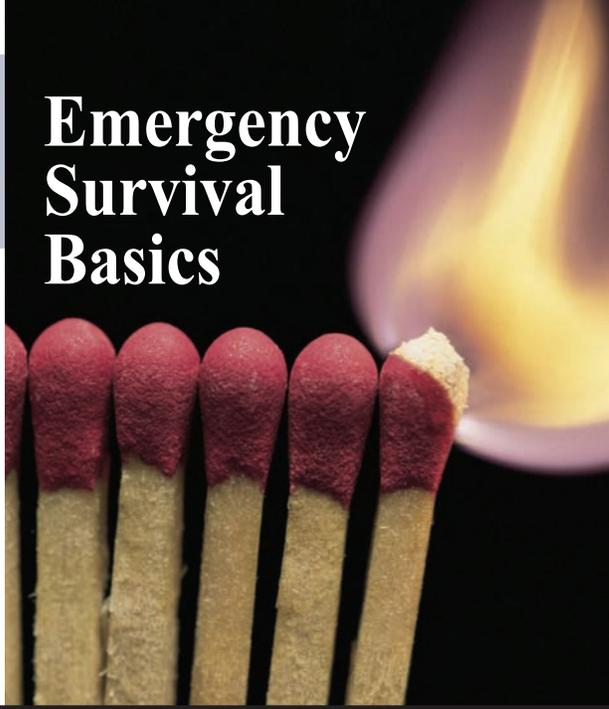
On the other hand, the chances that you'll lose a day of work because of food poisoning in the next year are much higher, 1 in 25—just about the same odds as being injured while playing ice hockey (1 in 30).

If you love the outdoor life, don't worry too much about being bitten by a poisonous snake. Your odds are just 1 in 40,000. But if you get on your bicycle, the chances of injury are greater, but still slim, just 1 in 25,000. If you stay inside and cook, chances are 1 in 500 that you'll be injured by a kitchen knife.

Chances are just about the same that there will be a serious fire in your home this year (1 in 160), or, that you'll be injured while bowling (1 in 200). But, there is a 1-in-3 chance that any smoke detector that isn't part of your security system won't function properly, so now may be the time to have any unprotected areas incorporated into your system.

It takes a sensible point of view and a realistic outlook on life to sort out most of what the "headlines" would have us worry about. What's the bottom-line message? Keep a sense of perspective about every day perils and realize that headlines are usually made because the incidents being reported are rare, not common. ❖

Emergency Survival Basics



Experts suggest that families should have a five-day supply of all of these items stored in airtight plastic bags and kept in one location. Water, food and medicines should be rotated with fresh supplies regularly—at least every six months. Here are some suggestions about what you should include in your basic survival “emergency” cache:

- Bottled water. Store a minimum of one gallon of water per person per day—a total of three to five gallons for each family member.

Choose a brand of bottled water that has an airtight inner seal under the lid to help ensure maximum storage life.

- Non-perishable foods. This should include such things as canned vegetables, fruits, meats and/or fish. You should also have at least one manual can opener with your supplies.

- High energy foods. This should include peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix, etc.

- Food staples and comfort foods. This should include sugar, salt, pepper, instant coffee or tea bags, cookies, hard candy and any other items you might want to munch on in times of stress.

In addition to things to eat and drink, and things to keep you and your family healthy, it’s good to have a supply of items to keep you in touch with the outside world, as well as warm, such as:

- Portable radio. A reliable AM/FM radio with plenty of fresh batteries.

- Flashlights. At least one, but preferably, several flashlights that all use the same size batteries (AA, C, etc.) with plenty of spare batteries.

- Fire starters and fire extinguisher. You should include a supply of matches or a butane lighter and a small canister-type, all-purpose fire extinguisher.

- Laundry bleach. Household chlorine bleach is an excellent disinfectant.

- Blankets. You should have one heavy blanket or sleeping bag for every family member.

- Spare clothing. You should have at least one clean change of clothing for every family member. If you have an infant, you’ll also want to keep a supply of disposable diapers and baby wipes on hand in your family’s emergency preparedness cache. ❖

ATMs Are Crime Magnets

Not so many years ago the infamous criminal John Dillinger was asked why he robbed banks. His often quoted answer was, “*Because that’s where they keep the money.*” Today’s criminals are just as savvy about knowing where to find cash—so ATMs, (and the parking lots near them), are right up there at the top of their list of prime opportunities.

Before you use any ATM machine, check your surroundings to help ensure your safety. Here are some common tips to keep in mind:

- If possible, avoid using an ATM when you’re alone. Otherwise, only use an ATM that is in a well-lit location, preferably one that is inside a locked enclosure that can only be entered with a bank card.

- Always fill out deposit en-

velopes before you go to the ATM and have your card ready.

- Put cash away immediately.
- If anyone or anything seems suspicious, cancel your transaction and go to another location.

- When others are around, stand directly in front of the transaction keypad so that your body blocks your PIN code and transactions from anyone else’s sight.

- Remember to give others their privacy also.

- If you think you’re being followed after using an ATM, go to a crowded area immediately and call the police, if necessary.

ATMs are a modern convenience and by following these simple precautions, using an ATM can be as safe as it is convenient. ❖



Dear Valued Customer,

Welcome to our summer newsletter. With traditional vacation time approaching, we'd like to suggest that this is a good time of the year to evaluate your home's safety and security status. As time away from home increases, so do opportunities when criminals can take advantage. It's the perfect opportunity to review your security needs.

To our clients with VOIP or FIOS. If you have changed or are considering changing to VOIP or FIOS for your telephone service, please see our website www.okaasco.com, Our Company tab, News drop down. The article: Are You considering FIOS or VOIP? has some interesting information and important concerns to contemplate when shopping telephone services. Be sure to test your system into the Central Station after any changes.

A note to our Anne Arundel County clients: Alarm registration is now required. Please obtain a form by visiting their website at www.aacounty.org/police. It is extremely important that when you receive your registration number that you call and give it to Ronnie (410) 766-8336 x21.

Sincerely,

Get The Latest Security Advantage For Your Security System With Back-up Cellular Monitoring

Please call for details

410-766-8336



AASCO

Post Office Box 159
Pasadena, MD 21123-0159

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lancaster, PA
Permit #88

If you refer someone to us who purchases a complete security or fire alarm system, we will show our appreciation with 2 months of FREE monitoring or credit.

In Case Of Emergency

An emergency can be anything from a weather-related event to an interruption of utility company service, from a terrorist attack to a major industrial accident. The most important thing to remember in any emergency—and, we don't mean to suggest it's an easy thing to do—but try to remain calm so you can assess the situation rationally and react safely and appropriately.

Another important thing to remember is that very often initial news media reports may be overstated, overly dramatized or otherwise grossly inaccurate. All too often, broadcast reporters tend to sacrifice truth and accuracy in their rush to be the first to cover a catastrophic event. It's not that they intentionally *get-it-wrong* on purpose, but their desire for *see-it-now* airtime can result in half-truths and details that are mostly speculative conjecture—all of which can make a situation appear more extreme than it really is. Rumors are an even less believable source of information. Whenever possible, try never to base your decisions or actions on information circulating through unofficial or unsubstantiated sources.

Having said all of that, what can you do to prepare you and your family for major emergencies? First, determine the nature and severity of the situation. Community emergencies can be divided into four types: temporary inconveniences (power is lost but is expected to be restored within "x" hours), major disruptions (train wrecks, multi-vehicle expressway accidents, bridge collapses, plane crashes, plant explosions), regional disasters (usually weather events), or major catastrophes (any event severe enough to bring the whole nation to a standstill—such as 9/11).

To be prepared, you and your family need to discuss and develop detailed "plans" that take into account as many variables as possible. The articles included in this issue should provide enough guidance to help you be prepared for a wide variety of emergency situations. ❖



AASCO

Post Office Box 159
Pasadena, MD 21123-0159
www.okaasco.com