



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](http://www.okaasco.com)**

## SECURITY MEASURES FOR MULTI-FAMILY COMPLEXES

We now live in an age where for many families, townhouses and upscale apartment complexes have become the modern "villages" of the 21st Century.

In addition to convenience and ultra-efficient living, these communities also bring with them a special set of security and safety concerns. And, whether it's your home, or that of a parent, a modern wireless security system can provide efficient, economical protection against intrusion.

In addition, apartment complex and townhouse residents should follow the same safety precautions as single-unit homeowners do to increase their level of protection:

- Lights—Put a timer on at least one light in the living area so that your home looks occupied even when you're away.
- Radio—Consider placing a radio near the front door and set the volume loud enough so that someone standing outside your door can hear it.
- Answering machines—Do not put messages on your answering machine that indicate you're away or not at home right now. Instead, indicate that you can't come to the phone for some other reason.

Today's multi-family communities represent a growing trend for the convenience and comfort they offer. You can significantly increase your level of safety by installing a state-of-the-art security system to protect your possessions and loved ones. Call us today for a complete, no-obligation evaluation and detailed security system proposal. ❖



**Exercise Tip:  
Glow in the dark**

Whether you go for an early morning run or a leisurely evening amble, remember that visibility should be a major concern during the low-visibility hours of dawn, dusk and at night.

Even if your activity is just a relaxing stroll, if it takes you onto a roadway, it's to your advantage to make absolutely certain that motorists can see you at all times. Wearing white or light colored clothing isn't always enough according to safety experts. Studies indicate that white or light colored clothing provides headlight visibility for up to approximately 200 feet. Unfortunately, a motorist traveling at an average speed needs a minimum of 225 feet of stopping distance after seeing an object on the roadway.

To increase your visibility when walking on or near roadways, safety experts recommend that everyone wear reflective clothing. Reflective materials have a far superior headlight-visibility distance—the point at which a motorist can "see" you—and increases your margin of safety by up to 500 feet allowing a motorist plenty of time to react and avoid a potentially dangerous incident.

Exercise is good—so is safety. Remember to glow-in-the-dark whenever you go out for a run in twilight. ❖



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Vehicle Security

Many apartment complex, townhouse and condominium communities require occupants to park their vehicles in designated spaces that can be easily associated with a particular dwelling. Often, these parking spaces actually have *dwelling-numbers* painted on the concrete, asphalt or curbstone. Unfortunately, when your assigned spaces are *empty*, it's obvious to criminals that you're away.

In communities with attached garages, it's equally important to remember to keep the garage door(s) closed at all



Multi-Family complex

times. When the garage door(s) are closed, would-be burglars can't tell if you are home or away—and, they don't have access to your garage-to-house entrance, which is generally less secure than your dwelling's main entrance.

If your vehicles aren't in garages, take these extra precautions to protect them from criminals:

- Always lock your vehicle when you leave it. If your vehicle has either an active or passive alarm system, be sure to "arm" it—even if you're just going to be inside your home for just a few minutes.
- Don't leave valuable objects or packages in plain view inside your vehicle.
- Equip your vehicle with a locking gas cap to prevent theft or vandalism.

Vehicle crimes represent one of the major categories of criminal activity in many multi-family complex communities. By following these simple precautions, you can help to keep your vehicles and their valuable accessories safe from would-be thieves. ❖

## SCHOOL YARD BULLIES

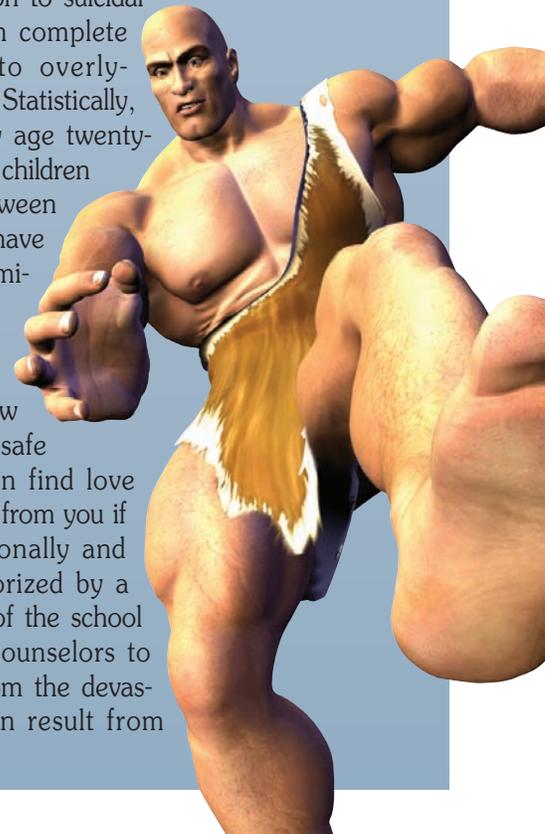
It wasn't too many years ago when a "school yard bully" would eventually get socked-in-the-nose by a victim who wasn't about to take it anymore. Such an incident would be seen by teachers and parents as part of growing up and would soon be forgotten. That notion of, "Well, he (or she) *deserved it*," is no longer acceptable.

Today, the school yard bullies are still there. It's estimated that 12-to-15 percent of all school age children are victimized by bullies. It's also estimated that the typical incident is brief, averaging just 37 seconds, but the emotional and psychological damage to those victimized can be permanent. A child can suffer for a long time before the source of his or her torment comes to light.

Bullying most often takes the form of emotional torment, and includes ostracizing, vindictive teasing and threatening. To a youngster, daily verbal assaults, having your possessions destroyed, listening to mocking and/or vulgar remarks about one's siblings or parents can shatter a young person's self-esteem.

Victims of psychological bullying can suffer everything from clinical depression to suicidal tendencies, and from complete social withdrawal to overly-aggressive behavior. Statistically, it's estimated that by age twenty-four, 60 percent of all children who were bullied between grades 6 through 9 have been arrested for criminal behavior.

What can you do? Talk with your kids. Let them know that their home is a safe place where they can find love and comfort and help from you if they're being emotionally and psychologically terrorized by a bully. Enlist the aid of the school administrators and counselors to protect your child from the devastating effect that can result from chronic bullying. ❖



# When Did You Stage Your Last Fire Drill?

If your first response was “*Fire what?*,” then this is a “must read” article.

In North America home fires kill more people every year than all other natural disasters combined. If you wake up in the middle of the night and find your house in flames, would you and your family members be prepared to escape in time?

Most people think they could escape, but very few have a fire escape plan for the whole family. Here are some of the things you need to do to create a workable plan to help you and your family survive a home fire:

- Devise an escape route for every family member. Find at least two ways to get out of every room. If your home's bedrooms are on the second or third floor, buy emergency escape ladders for every room and make certain that everyone knows how to use them.
- While fire safety experts recommend that every family member sleep with the door to their bedroom closed at night, not everyone follows that recommendation. If you and your family do, and your home is on fire, feel the door for heat before opening it. If the door feels warm or hot, do not open it and use another escape route.
- If you have to make your way through a smoke-filled hallway to escape, be certain to stay as low as possible and crawl to safety.
  - If all of your escape routes are blocked by smoke or fire, keep the doors and windows closed and signal through the window to attract attention. If you have a cell phone, call emergency services for help.
  - Get your children involved. Challenge them to find every fire extinguisher in your home and every possible way they can get out of the house in an emergency.

**MOST IMPORTANT**, devise an escape plan and practice it with your family at least twice a year. Designate a place outside of the home where everyone will meet after they've escaped. Once everyone is safely outside the home, never go back into the burning building. ❖



What should you do if you see a stranger lurking around or trying to break into someone else's home—or, your own home?

For many people, their first reaction is to verbally confront the individual. Calling out something like, “Hey, what are you doing there?” is a typical reaction.

But, crime prevention experts all agree: *Never, ever* confront or try to stop a criminal you suspect is committing a crime. A surprise confrontation with an intruder dramatically increases your odds of being injured or worse. Rather than putting yourself at risk, the experts agree that your only course of action should be to leave them alone and immediately contact your local law enforcement.

If you see something suspicious happening at a neighbor's house—or, even your own as you return home—either call 911 or the direct contact phone number for your nearest police station—then, wait and watch. While you're watching, write down all of the details you can about the individual you suspect is committing a crime. Note the physical description of the suspicious individual: his or her age, race, estimated height and weight, hair color and length, facial features, and clothing details, including his or her shoes. If you observe the person getting out of or into a vehicle, make a note of the make, model, color, license-plate number, the direction it was traveling and how many individuals were in the vehicle.

The most important thing to remember when trying to obtain details about the suspects and/or their vehicle is never put yourself in danger. This is especially true if it's your own home that an intruder has targeted. If you're returning home and see something suspicious, use your cell phone to notify police. If you're in your home and you hear someone trying to break-in, get out of the house any way you can and go to a neighbor's house for refuge and summon help from there. ❖



Dear Valued Customer,

Welcome to our Spring 2013 newsletter. With warmer weather just around the corner, we'd like to suggest that this is a good time of the year to evaluate your home's safety and security status. As leisure activities shift into high gear, often resulting in more time spent away from home. It's the perfect opportunity to review your security management details.

As the reliability issues of telephone technology change, we want you to know that there are cellular back up options for your security system. Please call Ronnie, (410) 766-8336 ext. 21 for the products available in your area.

**Tech Tip:** The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends that you replace your smoke detectors every ten years.

Also, please remember to test your alarm system.

Sincerely,

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

Please call for details

# 410-766-8336



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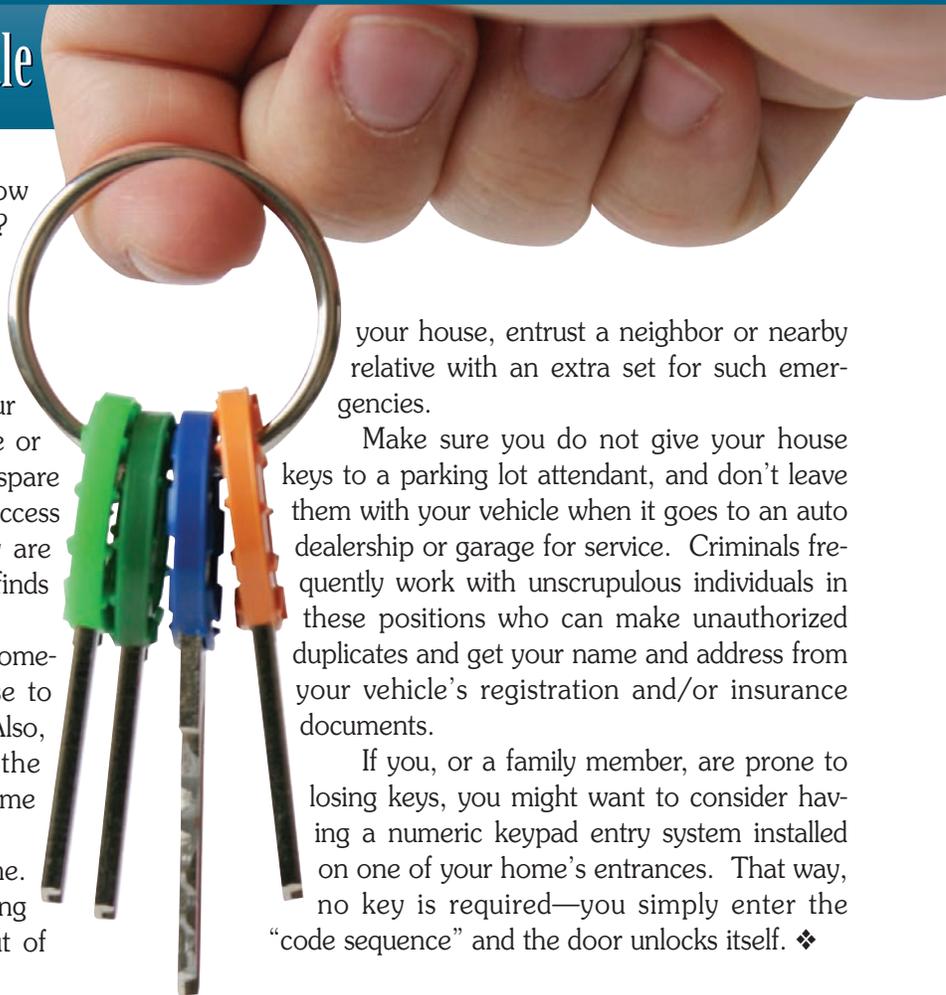
## Protecting The Keys To Your Castle

The first thing to consider is: Do you know where all of the keys to your home are located? That includes your primary keys that you and your family use; secondary keys that you may have given to friends, neighbors, relatives, housekeepers, pet sitters and/or utility personnel.

You should know where all of the keys to your home are, but never mark them with your name or address. Keep in mind that when you share a spare set of keys with anyone, they have unrestricted access to your home. If they lose the keys, and they are marked with your name and address, whoever finds them has access to your home as well.

If you move into a new home—or if you, or someone with a key to your home loses it—it's wise to have all of the locks in your home re-keyed. Also, it's a very good idea to change the code in the garage-door opener when you move into a home that is equipped with one.

Do not hide an extra key outside your home. Criminals are aware of all of the customary hiding places. If you are prone to locking yourself out of



your house, entrust a neighbor or nearby relative with an extra set for such emergencies.

Make sure you do not give your house keys to a parking lot attendant, and don't leave them with your vehicle when it goes to an auto dealership or garage for service. Criminals frequently work with unscrupulous individuals in these positions who can make unauthorized duplicates and get your name and address from your vehicle's registration and/or insurance documents.

If you, or a family member, are prone to losing keys, you might want to consider having a numeric keypad entry system installed on one of your home's entrances. That way, no key is required—you simply enter the "code sequence" and the door unlocks itself. ❖