



# DenverDA

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## Crime Alert!!!

### Door to Door Thieves Are Burglarizing Elders' Homes

Thieves masquerading as security alarm employees are burglarizing older Denver residents inside of their homes by claiming their alarms are in need of repair. Last summer, similar cases were reported of criminals posing as roofers, fence installers, utility workers and those of other trades. Such criminals are also referred to as “distraction thieves” because they lure their unsuspecting victims outdoors under false pretenses, such as to help locate property lines, or to assess “damaged power lines”, or trees in need of pruning. While the victim is detained, another partner in on the crime goes into the home, burglarizes it, and then disappears before the victim realizes that a crime has taken place. Unlike the more widely known con artists who pitch home improvement scams door-to-door, “distraction” burglars pose potentially greater harm to their older victims, especially if the elder confronts the burglar in his/her home.

With the warmer weather approaching, it's likely there will be resurgence in these kinds of crimes. As a general rule, residents should also be cautious of any stranger who goes door-to-door asking to use the phone or bathroom, or who tells a “down on their luck” story in an attempt to get a foot in the door. Neighbors can be helpful by reporting any suspicious activity to police.

#### Other precautions to consider:

- Never open the door to anyone that you don't know, and never let a stranger into your home without first checking their credentials. Utility companies and other solicitors that operate in the City of Denver must display visible identification. To be on the safe side, refuse the service, shut the door and call the company represented by the solicitor to verify their legitimacy.
- Only talk to strangers through a closed and locked screen door. For peace of mind, consider installing locks on all front-door screens.

**Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179**

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