

Guard against holiday thefts

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With Christmas less than a week away, last-minute shoppers will be scurrying from store to store to find that perfect gift. And those who shop online will be eagerly awaiting their package delivery at home.

But with holiday shopping comes an increase in thefts, from car break-ins to “porch pirates” who steal packages from residential doorsteps. So, holiday shoppers might want to take a few precautionary measures during the final Christmas shopping weekend.

Those people who work outside the home can ask to have a package delivered to their place of work, or to a friend’s house where someone will be at home.

Also available are home security systems, even ones with cameras and smartphone apps that notify owners of suspicious activity in real time. “Those are really good systems. Most people have wi-fi, so it’s not too much to make the stretch to an affordable security system,” said Del Norte County Sheriff’s Commander Bill Stevens.

And he urges retail shoppers hopping from shop to shop not to leave anything valuable unattended in their cars. “A lot of people get their cars broken into [because] things that look tantalizing can be seen through the windows,” Stevens said. “Don’t leave anything in your car that makes anybody think it's worth it to break the window.”