



THE ULTIMATE CRIME BARRIER

ASSESS HOME SECURITY FOR SAFE HOLIDAYS

With Rian du Toit, Branch Manager, Trellidor Johannesburg South & West

Introduction

The 2007/8 crime statistics released by the SAPS recently showed that the incidence of house and business robberies has increased yet again. Whether you're planning to leave your properties vacant over the holiday season or staying at home, it is wise to take stock of the security measures you already have in place and, if necessary, make the decision to upgrade these measures well before security manufacturers close for the annual shutdown period in December.

What makes a good security system?

A good security system is one that makes it very difficult for robbers to gain access to the premises, encouraging them to try elsewhere. When a robber decides to try his luck at your home he has a good idea of how much time to give himself to get in as he has often watched the residents' activities in and around the house or got inside information. The self-imposed time limit he gives himself to break in depends on what he has to get through. The more obstacles there are in his way, the harder it is to gain access and the higher the risk of discovery, which discourages him from trying in the first place.

Most of us in the security business recommend 'layers' of security rather than relying entirely on one method. The starting point is good quality barriers on all doors, windows and in passageways to close off bedroom areas, followed by alarm systems, perimeter security, beams, panic buttons, armed response and so on.

Where does one begin to develop good security?

- The first step is to **assess your home's current security**. Check that every door and window is secured with barriers that aren't damaged or corroded. Badly maintained barriers are no match for determined robbers. In the long run it's cheaper to replace these than stolen goods. Trellidor has a questionnaire at www.trellidor.co.za/trellidor/risk_assessment.asp to help you decide what level of security your home needs, or any of our sales consultants will do this for you free of charge.
- **Invest in layers of security**, as I've mentioned before. High quality barriers for doors and windows should be your first security layer. Most people fit security gates to external doors, but also ensure you have burglar proofing on all windows, no matter how small or inaccessible they seem. It's amazing what determined robbers can get through! As finances allow, add further layers such as good perimeter security, burglar alarms, movement sensors, panic buttons and armed response.
- **Be disciplined about using your security measures**. Most home invasions happen when the occupants are at home, i.e. between 6.00pm and 6.00am, because robbers know that people are slack about using their security when they're home.

Simple actions such as:

- ✓ closing and locking your garage door
- ✓ keeping security gates locked at all times, even if you're home
- ✓ setting your alarm every night if staying at home or when you leave the house for your vacation away
- ✓ not leaving tools conveniently lying around for opportunistic criminals
- ✓ stopping any regular deliveries to your home well in advance of your holiday.
- ✓ notifying neighbours if you're going away



THE *ULTIMATE* CRIME BARRIER

- **Know who has access to your house keys.** If you've recently dismissed domestic workers that had access to your security gate and door keys, consider changing all the locks. If these keys fall into the wrong hands, robbers will have carte blanche to your home. The same applies if you've just moved into a new home.
- **Set up a Safe Room.** If you are home and invaded in spite of your security measures, you need a safe haven to run to, call for help and wait it out. This is known internationally as a 'safe room' or 'panic room' and is relatively easy to set up. The bathroom is usually the best place as it has running water and a toilet, but securing the bedroom area or one bedroom is also an option. Trellidor can help you decide on the best location and how to secure it. For example, it's best to have sliding barriers on the safe room windows so that you can escape if necessary.
- **Secure your business as well as your home.** Burglary at business premises has increased for the second consecutive year. Avoid becoming an easy target during the shut-down period by improving security measures. Trellidor offers options such as electric claw locks on security gates that work off keypads and/or push buttons to restrict access. We also manufacture the Trellidor Trojan, certified by the UK's Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB) as the strongest sliding security barrier in the world, and a variety of window products.
- **Don't buy into the myth of housing estates being completely secure.** We are seeing increasing reports of break-ins at 'secure' complexes. Take responsibility for your own security rather than leaving it to the body corporate or homeowners' association.
- **Take specialised needs into account wherever possible.** Trellidor has solutions such as recessed tracks, tracks that lift up and locks fitted within easy reach to make emergency evacuations less distressing for the elderly, walking-disabled, wheelchair-bound, and very young.

###

For further information contact:

Rian du Toit
Branch Manager
Trellidor Johannesburg South & West
Tel: 011 494 5267



THE *ULTIMATE* CRIME BARRIER

TRELLIDOR'S HOLIDAY SECURITY CHECKLIST

- Entire home checked for weak points that need additional security such as new barriers on doors, windows and in passageways. Don't forget outbuildings.
- Alarm tested and in good working order.
- All door and security gate locks tested and keys in safe place.
- All sliding security gates closed and locked.
- Garage doors locked and no automatic gate or garage door controls left lying around.
- Shrubs around entrances trimmed so that they don't offer concealment to intruders and garden tidied to look 'lived in' while residents away.
- Lights connected to timers or movement sensors.
- Newspapers and other home deliveries cancelled for the period residents are away and someone arranged to collect post.
- No cell phones and other small valuables left lying around.
- List of emergency numbers near telephone or programmed into mobile phone e.g. local police station, fire station, ambulance service and letting agent's after hours number.
- Neighbourhood Watch informed of period house will be unoccupied.

###