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# FMC Holiday Security Brief

DEFENSE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AGENCY

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# OPSEC and The Holidays



OPSEC is the process used to identify and protect sensitive information from our adversaries.

We can apply the same methodology to protecting our families and homes over the upcoming holiday season.



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# Presents and Porch Pirates



Porch pirates are in overdrive. Roughly 14% of Americans say they've been victims of package theft in the last 12 months. This equates to about 35.5 million Americans and an average value of \$156.82 being reported stolen. In total, Americans lost about \$5.4 billion from package theft over the past 12 months courtesy of porch pirates.

- ❖ Track your packages. The US Postal Service, FedEx and UPS all have systems to track your packages from the retailer to your doorstep. All three use tracking numbers that can be used to figure out where the item is and when it should be delivered to your home.
- ❖ Deliver to your office or neighbor. Another surefire way to thwart porch pirates is to not have packages delivered to your home at all. Many people have holiday packages delivered to their workplace or to a trusted neighbor nearby, who'll be at home when the item arrives. FedEx will hold your package for pickup at one of its FedEx Office locations or at Walgreens. Packages sent via UPS can be picked up at a UPS facility, diverted to a UPS Store or even delivered on another day that's more convenient for you.
- ❖ If a neighbor can't receive your packages and you can't get them at work, another option is available. Try a doorman service that lets you arrange for a package to be held at a warehouse until you arrive home. Then you can arrange delivery for evening hours that better suit you.
- ❖ Set up a live recording video camera aimed at your porch. That could allow you to spot a theft as it happens and alert law enforcement officials, or at least provide you with video that might help identify the thieves.



# Presents/Trash



## Holiday Trash:

- ❖ Computer Boxes
- ❖ Television Boxes
- ❖ Home Entertainment System Boxes
- ❖ Gaming System Boxes



Boxes left curbside for trash collection are indicators to burglars (and nosy neighbors) about what high valued items are located in your house. If possible, breakdown the boxes to burn, or take them to a landfill.



# OPSEC at Home



Be alert to canvassers and other persons requesting access to your residence. Verify their identity before allowing them entry into your home.

- ❖ Use only reputable, licensed companies
- ❖ Keep valuables out of sight
- ❖ Be on good relations with your neighbors and look out for each other
- ❖ Carefully control your keys
- ❖ Improve exterior lighting

Use a home security system.

Home security systems can be improved with measures like:

- ❖ Video surveillance
- ❖ Securing doors locks
- ❖ Turning on lights



# OPSEC at Home



When socializing at parties over the holidays don't talk "shop" around those who don't have a need to know, and be wary of attempts to elicit information, even from friends and family.

Be wary of strangers showing interest.



Monitor internet/social media acquaintances for all family members.

Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement.



# OPSEC and Travel



With the removal of several international air travel restrictions, and relaxation of COVID-19 social distancing rules, an estimated 6.4 million more people will travel this Thanksgiving than in 2020. Delayed and stranded passengers and drivers will likely cause disturbances at airports and major highways, requiring additional LE resources.



# OPSEC & Shopping



Identify key information to protect and apply the necessary countermeasures to safeguard that information.



Disturbances in the global supply chain may motivate shoppers to congregate at retail locations for the “Black Friday” events in higher concentrations than in previous years. Such mass gatherings are likely to lead to unruly, chaotic behaviors, requiring additional LE and other first responder support.

Credit card/ATM numbers - Be wary of “shoulder surfers” with cell phone cameras as you take out cash from ATMs or pay for items with credit cards.

Online shopping events such as “Cyber Monday” represent attractive targets to malicious cyber actors seeking to conduct scams and phishing attacks. This year, shoppers facing limited merchandise selection may be especially vulnerable to cyber scams.



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# OPSEC & Shopping



If carrying a large amount of cash, keep a portion of the money separate from your wallet in case you get pick pocketed or lose your wallet.



If purchasing an enormous amount of presents and have to take a trip to the car to unload your packages, make sure you place the items in your trunk and out of sight.

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# Social Media



- ❖ Social Networking sites are an effective tool people can use to communicate their messages and tell their stories.
- ❖ However, revealing too much information can result in disclosing your location, and activities.
- ❖ You or your children posting that you're looking forward to Santa bringing you a new PlayStation 5 is an open door for thieves.
- ❖ Posting pics of you away in Costa Rica is an open door for burglars.
- ❖ Take the following measures to make your social media posting safe:
  - Be cautious of sharing too much
  - Adjust privacy settings
  - Verify who you're connecting with
  - Don't share personal details
  - Use a unique strong passwords



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