



As the weather gets warmer and more people are out and about, the number of thefts and burglaries tends to increase.

The Grand Island Police Department has created a crime prevention unit to help reduce crime in the community. Crime prevention officer Butch Hurst said there are a number of ways to approach the problems of theft and burglary.

One of Hurst's main goals is to get residents to lock their homes, businesses and vehicles. The Police Department has a [Home Security Inspection Checklist](#) available. An officer can assist with the checklist, or residents can take it and do it themselves.

A security inspection begins at the front door and moves on to windows, locks, lights and landscaping, according to the checklist. The list asks, among other things: Is the door metal or solid wood? Is the door frame strong and tight? Are door hinges protected from outside removal? Are locks in good repair? Are strike plates adequate and properly installed? Can the lock be reached through a mail slot or pet door? And is there outdoor lighting?

The checklist also asks about entry points at back doors, in garages and basements, if windows have adequate locks, if upper-floor windows open onto porches or roofs, if trees and shrubbery are kept trimmed back from upper-floor windows, if there are ladders kept outside and if the exterior of the home has adequate lighting, among other things.

Hurst's second goal concerning thefts and burglaries is to have residents keep records of their valuables. There are a number of ways to do that, including making lists of makes, models and serial numbers and taking photos.

The Police Department has signed up with LeadsOnline, a secure online storage site where people can record information on their personal property. Law enforcement doesn't see or have access to the information. Only the person who enters it online and has the correct password can view it and retrieve it. The system is accessible from any computer, so it can be used to retrieve information about stolen items, Hurst said.

It is important for burglary and theft victims to have the serial numbers of stolen items. Photos are also helpful when making a positive identification, according to LeadsOnline. The ReportIt citizen property inventory system with LeadsOnline, [www.reportit.leadsonline.com](http://www.reportit.leadsonline.com), is free because the GIPD signed up.

Anyone with questions about ReportIt or crime prevention in general you can call Hurst at 385-5400, extension 2297. He's also available for presentations on how to keep personal and business property safe.