



# CHICO POLICE DEPARTMENT

## *Public Service Announcement*

530-897-4942

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### ***Crime prevention while shopping during the holidays***

**The holiday season in Chico here, and with it, thieves are busy. Nothing spoils your holiday spirit faster than having your valuables stolen.**

#### **Here are some tips if you are shopping in Chico for the holidays:**

- Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you. Avoid distractions such as texting or talking on your cell phone.
- If shopping at night, park in a well-lighted space.
- Be sure to lock your car, close windows, and hide all valuables such as GPS units, sunglasses, electronics, shopping bags, and gifts in the trunk. If a thief can see it, it may get stolen.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.
- Call to cancel missing and stolen credit and debit cards and file a police report immediately.
- Make sure to complete warranty and/or product registration forms and mail them out as soon as possible since they may provide some kind of protection or replacement value if your property is stolen.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages.
- Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Carry a purse close to your body in the front. If you are carrying a wallet, place it in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- If shopping with children, have a plan in case you get separated. For the older children, have a central meeting spot designated. For the younger children teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated. Be sure they know your name (not just mommy and daddy), cell phone number, and their address. Go over the dangers of strangers with them so they know who not to talk to or follow.
- Check receipts to see whether your full credit card number appears. If a receipt has your full number on it, take a pen and thoroughly scratch it out.
- Double check that you have your credit cards and check book after you pay for your items.
- Keep your purse closed and in view while shopping. Don't allow a thief the opportunity to steal your wallet from your cart while your back is turned.

**The Chico Police Department wishes you a happy and crime-free holiday shopping season!**

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