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Newsletter

May 2010

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BOGUS CALLERS!

- There are approx 12,000 reported incidents of 'distraction burglary' every year - when callers get into a person's home through false pretences, and steal cash or valuables while the homeowner is distracted.
- The more dangerous and complex scams involve people pretending to be from utilities companies and asking for access to homes.
- They often work in pairs - with one person distracting the resident while the other is rifling through their belongings.

Dear Reader

Most people who call at your home will be genuine. But sometimes, people turn up unannounced with the intention of tricking their way into your home to steal your valuables and money.

It's a common scenario: somebody knocks on your door and tells you their car has broken down, and asks to use your phone to call the recovery service. Whilst inside your home, they distract you and steal your belongings. The only problem? **It's a scam.**

Follow the advice below on how to deal with unexpected visitors...

BE CAUTIOUS!

When a stranger rings your bell, be cautious. Don't let anybody in unless you are expecting them. Representatives of the water, gas and electric companies rarely make house calls without appointments. If there is a real gas or water emergency, police and firefighters are likely to be present.



There are some simple precautions you can take to help ensure you don't become a victim:

- talk to people through the door, rather than opening it when they knock
- ask who they are before opening the door, then keep the door on the chain until you've seen their identification. Genuine tradesmen should carry a photographic identification card
- check their identification card carefully. If you are unsure, telephone Quick Check on **0800 013 22 90**. Quick Check is a 24-hour freephone service which allows householders to make a call to verify the identity of anyone calling at their door.

LOCK, STOP, CHAIN, CHECK!

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Always follow the good doorstep procedure below to help beat the bogus callers:

- **LOCK** - keep front and back doors locked (with keys taken out), even when at home
- **STOP** - stop and think if anyone is expected; look through a spy hole or window to identify the caller
- **CHAIN** - put the door chain on first before opening the door, and keep it on whilst talking to the caller
- **CHECK** - check their identity card carefully even if the caller has a pre-arranged appointment (close the door whilst doing this); ring to verify the caller's identity.

If in any doubt, keep the caller out!

"Your Local...Professional...Mobile Locksmiths!"