



Columbia Heights Police Department



Package Theft Prevention



Package theft is a common occurrence during holiday months as residents purchase more goods that are shipped to their homes. Many of these incidents are crimes of opportunity. An offender may not intend to target a particular home, but walks or drives by an area and sees an easy target where something of perceived value can be quickly taken without notice. On occasion we hear about thieves who trail a delivery truck, stealing packages as they are dropped off. Not only is an untended package that is visible from the street vulnerable to theft, but it may indicate that no one is home, making the home a possible target for burglary.

There are a number of delivery options available to the consumer that can help reduce package theft. Some options to consider:

- Ship your package to a location where someone you know will be available to receive it, which may include your work address or a relative, neighbor, or friend's home. Some shipping companies will allow you to choose a preferred time and date as well as to change locations when the package is in route.
- Require a signature for deliveries.
- Track your package and request an email, text, or other alert about the status of delivery.
- Consider using other delivery options that are available. Retailers and shipping companies may deliver to other secured locations including lockers or allow you to pick up at the retail store or package carrier.
- If there are no other options, provide specific instructions about where the package should be left on your property. Choose a location that conceals the item, so that it can't be seen by people walking or driving in the area.
- If you are going on vacation, place deliveries on hold until you return from your trip.
- If you frequently receive deliveries to your residence, consider purchasing a locking parcel delivery box that can be bolted down or secured.
- As a good neighbor, be alert and report all crime and suspicious activity. If you see a package being stolen from a neighbor's home, call 911. Neighbors are encouraged to call suspicious activity to the police by calling 911.
- Report package theft by calling 911