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A weekly Q&A
with the Owatonna
Police Department

Submit your question to news@owatonna.com or 444-2379

Q: Should I keep my house and garage locked?

A: In August of 1963 our own Minnesota-born folk singer, Bob Dylan recorded a song titled, "Times They Are A Changing". Though the message conveyed by Dylan's song was different than mine is today, I believe the significance I place on the title is just as important to the citizens of Owatonna. Not only are the "times a changing" but when it comes to certain matters that have changed Owatonna as it has become the land of opportunity for both the good and the bad. However, this is nothing more and nothing less than what is experienced by all growing communities. As police officers it is our duty to protect both the citizens and their property. One avenue we take in performing this obligation is through education.

Both homes and garages should be kept locked. Burglaries of homes and garages continue to rise as our citizens provide an easy opportunity for individuals to enter with the least amount of detection to remove property. In 2006 the citizens of Owatonna became victim to 135 burglaries and 499 thefts. A large number of our burglaries and thefts are not perpetrated to seek out antiques, silver and items of high value. Burglars enter the home with the intent to remove items that they may easily pawn or sell on the street to obtain money for drugs or directly trade for drugs

Always keep your homes and garages locked, making it more difficult for any burglar. One statistic we don't have is the number of homes that a burglar planned on entering but upon discovering all doors and windows locked then walked to a neighboring home and helped themselves to the possessions. Perhaps you are one of these people who have sat back and felt lucky that your home wasn't burglarized while your neighbor became a victim. Just maybe it was some simple steps of crime prevention on your part and nothing to do with luck at all.

Captain J.H. Schramm
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