Spring 2009
Break-ins in Brown Township

Pam Sayre
Brown Township Trustee

On a Friday evening in December, as we arrived home from work, my husband, who was first to arrive, noticed our back door was ajar. As he walked closer, he found he could push open the door with his finger. Inside, door trim, part of the frame and screws lay on the kitchen floor. As he carefully checked the house, he noticed the computer was missing, yet everything else seemed to be in its place. Walking back to the bedroom, he stopped when he saw that it had been completely ransacked. Knowing not to touch anything, he came back to the kitchen and waited for me to arrive.

I knew as soon as I turned into the driveway that something was very wrong. For one thing, every light in the house and outside of the house was on. For us, that was not normal. After I scanned the house, I called 462-3333 to report we had been burglarized. I have no idea why I did not call 911, other than I did not consider it a life threatening emergency. The damage had already been done, and no one was hurt.

Within 15 minutes, three sheriff cars were in our driveway. They went through the first floor of the house then, two went to the basement with pistols ready, in case anyone was still in the house. After they came back upstairs, they calmly asked us questions, made notes, and asked us to fill out a report. They stayed and talked to us for a while to make sure we were all right and told us the best way to find our missing possessions would be to visit pawn shops. Most pawn shops now are licensed and anyone who brings in something to pawn must show identification.

As they left, they checked the nearby farm field for footprints. None were evident. This suggested that a vehicle was in our driveway that day, yet none of our neighbors saw anything. Considering the whole crime probably took less than ten minutes, it is highly probable that no one would have seen anything anyway given that our homes are not close together.

It is our duty as neighbors to notice and report anything suspicious. Several weeks later, I did that very thing. I was traveling north on Amity, and had just passed Beach Road, when I noticed an old white van backed up in the driveway of a home. I quickly called 462-3333 and reported the suspicious vehicle. By the time I was heading east on Hayden Run, I had passed the deputy who was hopefully on his way to check it out.

Please review the home security checklist on the next page to see what you can do to make your home safer. Also, be sure to give us your opinion on adding police protection in Brown Township by completing the enclosed survey card.

On March 18, 2009, the City of Hilliard started the process of updating their comprehensive plan. The Hilliard West Subarea is adjacent to and overlays parts of Brown Township. The area also includes hundreds of acres of undeveloped township land recently annexed to and slated for development. A website has been established to track progress, obtain feedback and keep the public informed. The website address is http://www.HilliardOfTheFuture.org.

Hilliard’s planning process will include three “subarea” meetings. The West Subarea public meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 15 at the Phyllis Ernst Senior Center in Hilliard Municipal Park. All township residents are encouraged to attend!

Use this as a guide as you check your home for safety measures. Boxes marked “no” indicate areas where you could take action to improve your home’s security. These are just some of the steps you can take to decrease the likelihood that you or your home is targeted.

**Exterior Doors**
- Yes  No  All doors are locked at night and every time we leave the house—even if it’s just for a few minutes.
- Yes  No  Doors are solid hardwood or metal-clad.
- Yes  No  Doors feature wide-angle peepholes at heights everyone can use.
- Yes  No  If there are glass panels in or near our doors, they are reinforced in some way so that they cannot be shattered.
- Yes  No  All entryways have a working, keyed entry lock and sturdy deadbolt lock installed into the frame of the door.
- Yes  No  Spare keys are kept with a trusted neighbor, not under a doormat or planter, on a ledge, or in the mailbox.

**Garage and Sliding Door Security**
- Yes  No  The door leading from the attached garage to the house is solid wood or metal-clad and protected with a quality keyed door lock and deadbolt.
- Yes  No  The overhead garage door has a lock so that we do not rely solely on the automatic door opener to provide security.
- Yes  No  Garage doors are all locked when leaving the house.
- Yes  No  The sliding glass door has a strong, working key locks.
- Yes  No  A dowel or a pin to secure a glass door has been installed to prevent the door from being shoved aside or lifted off the track.
- Yes  No  The sliding door is locked every night and each time we leave the house.

**Protecting Windows**
- Yes  No  Every window in the house has a working key lock or is securely pinned.
- Yes  No  Windows are always locked, even when they are opened a few inches for ventilation.

**Outdoor Security**
- Yes  No  Shrubs and bushes are trimmed so there is no place for someone to hide.
- Yes  No  There are no dark areas around our house, garage, or yard at night that would hide prowlers.
- Yes  No  Every outside door has a bright, working light to illuminate visitors.
- Yes  No  Floodlights are used appropriately to ensure effective illumination.
- Yes  No  Outdoor lights are on in the evening—whether someone is at home or not or a photocell or motion-sensitive lighting system has been installed.
- Yes  No  Our house number is clearly displayed so police and other emergency vehicles can find the house quickly.
- Yes  No  At least two light timers have been set to turn the lights on and off in a logical sequence, when we are away from home for an extended time period.
- Yes  No  The motion detector or other alarm system (if we have one) has been activated when we leave home.
- Yes  No  Mail and newspaper deliveries have been stopped or arrangements for a neighbor/ friend to pick them up have been made when we go away from home for a period of time.
- Yes  No  A neighbor has been asked to tend the yard and watch our home when we are away.
- Yes  No  Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are all locked with high-security, laminated padlocks.
- Yes  No  Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are locked after every use.
- Yes  No  Grills, lawn mowers, and other valuables are stored in a locked garage or shed, or if left out in the open, are hidden from view with a tarp and securely locked to a stationary point.
- Yes  No  Every bicycle is secured with a U-bar lock or quality padlock and chain. Bikes are always locked, even if we leave them for just a minute.
- Yes  No  Firearms are stored unloaded and locked in storage boxes and secured with trigger guard locks.
- Yes  No  Valuable items, such as television, stereos, and computers have been inscribed with identifying number approved by local police.
- Yes  No  Our home inventory is up-to-date and includes pictures. A complete copy is kept somewhere out of the house.
Help Brown Township
Stay in Compliance

All communities that have a storm drain system are required to apply for a permit from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discharge storm water (rain runoff or snow melt) into streams and rivers. The new permit for January, 2009 to January, 2014 has just been issued. There are six “minimum control measures” that Brown Township must follow in order to be in compliance and not degrade the local rivers and streams.

For two of these measures, we are dependent on you, our township residents for assistance. The Ohio EPA must also consider them important because they are the first two requirements in the permit! The first minimum control measure is Public Education and Outreach on Storm Water Impacts. The second is Public Involvement/Participation.

How can you, as a resident of Brown Township, help your township trustees and staff follow these regulations? Get involved! Do you volunteer with a Boy or Girl Scout troop, religious youth group, neighborhood or homeowners association, or community service organization? For your next service project, please consider a stream-side cleanup, tree planting, anti-litter or no-dumping campaign, or.... Be creative! Are you a master gardener? Maybe you can teach a class in composting so neighbors don’t toss yard waste down the bank of a nearby stream. Are you an expert baker? Hold a bake sale with your friends at a community event and donate the profits to the township for one of these water quality service projects.

We all benefit from clean and healthy streams and rivers. You can help both Brown Township and the natural world by getting involved. For more information, call Mary Ann Brouillette at Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (486-9613, www.franklinswcd.org).

In the fall of 2008, the parking lot, between the firehouse and the Township Hall, was completely re-done to facilitate better drainage.

Providing a stronger base for the heavier vehicles, such as the fire truck, the trash hauler and the snow removal truck, that use the lot on a regular basis, was also a prime concern.

It quickly became evident that the recycling bins would need to be moved from the back lot to the front lot after the project was completed. So, please note you will find the recycling bins next to the trash bin that is for fire department use only. Please be mindful of the following when using the recycling bins:

Please cut all cardboard boxes into pieces before placing the items into the bin. This will save room and allow for more recycling materials to be placed in the bin before pick-up.

Do not place recyclables between the bins. All recyclables must be inside the bin. Thank you for your cooperation.

10 Things we can do to prevent stormwater runoff pollution:

• Conserve water — stop outdoor faucets and hoses from dripping
• Never dump anything down storm drains to tiles
• Pick up after your pet
• Sweep up driveway litter instead of hosing it into a drainage ditch
• Use fertilizers & pesticides sparingly — consider a professional applicator
• Plant gardens in bare spots to better absorb runoff
• Direct rooftop runoff into grass or gardens
• Check your cars for leaks (and fix them)
• Wash your car at the car wash
• Compost your yard and organic waste

Remember: What runs on the ground affects the local streams and creeks. What soaks into the ground might show up in your drinking water!
Want to be Added to Our Mailing List or Have a Change of Address?

Please use any of the following:

- Fill out the name, address, additions and corrections form on the Brown Township website under “Newsletters”
- Call the Township Fiscal Officer (614-876-2133)
- Via fax to the Township Office (614-876-2421)
- Or by mail to the return address above.