



For Immediate Release

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Officials Urge Holiday Safety

“As the details of the horrific Berlin Christmas market (presumed) terrorist attack unfold, we learn that 12 were killed and 45 injured. We pray for these innocent victims who were enjoying an outdoor holiday event together,” said Dale Lane, Shelby County Office of Preparedness (SCOP) Director. “The busyness and distractions of shopping and entertaining can lead citizens to become “soft targets” for terrorists. The best gift you can give your loved ones this season is to practice personal safety in public places, at home, and in your vehicle. Never underestimate the power you have to influence your survival. Don’t be complacent. Stay vigilant. Plan to survive.” SCOP offers these holiday safety tips:

Outdoors and Public Event Safety:

- Knowledge is power. Monitor the news and follow security advisories for potential threats.
- Stay alert to people and conditions around you.
- Keep cell phone charged and ready.
- Have a pre-planned meeting place if you get separated from family.
- Let others know where you are going when you plan to be back.
- Minimize distractions. Stay off cell phones while walking. Do not use earphones in public.
- Use the “buddy system.” Go to public events with at least one other person.
- Look for at least 2 exits and establish an escape route. Prepare to react quickly.
- If you see anything suspicious, tell authorities! **If you see something, say something!**
- Practice the **“Run, Hide, Fight”** response to active shooter events. View the YouTube video at <https://youtu.be/5VcSwejU2D0>.

Home Safety:

- Do not post vacation plans on social media.
- Lock all doors and windows and activate alarm systems.
- Have effective outdoor lighting and use timers for indoor lights and electronics.
- Let a trusted neighbor and the police know when you are going out of town.
- Inventory your possessions with photographs and serial numbers.
- When out of town, stop newspaper and mail deliveries. Pick up packages at the delivery service provider’s location.

Auto Safety:

- Park in well-lit areas away from vans, trucks, camper shells or vehicles with tinted windows.
- Lock doors and activate the alarm systems. Use anti-theft devices such as the “CLUB.”
- Keep all valuables, packages, and gifts out of sight - locked up in the trunk.
- Maintain key control by having keys ready to use when walking to your vehicle.
- Look around and in the backseat of your vehicle before opening the door.

End of Release