Avoid becoming a January Victim

After a 2-week break, we are getting back into the swing of things. We are re-learning to wake up early, prioritize our time, and survive without endless holiday sweets. Yet, data shows that many of us tend to forget how to safely walk around in the U District in January. This month sees an increase in attacks and robberies. Therefore, when walking around, especially if alone or at night, be extremely aware of your surroundings.

In such cold weather it is tempting to take a shortcut, but taking time to walk the safest route might save your life or belongings in the long run. Walk to your destination with a group if at all possible. Walk in well-lit areas. Use the edge of the sidewalk in order to distance yourself from assailants who may be hiding near buildings or in bushes. Think offensively instead of defensively; pretend you are a cop, looking for the “bad guys.” This way of thinking will likely reduce your stress levels, keep your mind clear, and make you feel calm and confident. Also, be ready to enter your destination with the keys in your hand or a friend at the door. And always be attentive, this means not listening to earphones, texting, talking on the phone, or fumbling through a bag.

If you are confronted by an attacker answer their demands. Is it worth a possible trip to the hospital defending your phone or wallet? Things can be replaced, you can’t. However, if someone grabs you, make a scene by kicking, yelling (avoid screaming because it exhausts you quickly), and fighting back.

MLK Day 2010 -- Make It A Day ON!

Can’t find a place to stay for Whistler Weekend? Stick around town and earn some good karma (and a free t-shirt) by signing up for a service project on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 18, 2010! Find a project at http://depts.washington.edu/mlkjr/. Your Neighborhood Assistants and approximately 20 volunteers will be out in the North of 45th neighborhood picking up trash -- if you spot us, say hello!

Join us on NIGHT WALK- January 28, 2010

To evaluate the walking experience in our neighborhood at night we are holding a NightWalk on Thursday, January 28 at 7pm. Each group will receive a survey that will evaluate, for example, lights that are out, dark areas and possible restricted visibilities from trees and bushes. This information then will be shared with various agencies and groups to help improve safety in our area. If you would like to volunteer we are meeting in the 17th median at 17th Ave. and 47th St. Bring a friend and help us help you! For more information email Sydney at huskyn45@uw.edu
You may have some experience with either hosting or attending an off campus party. One way to quickly ruin the fun is to have the police show up at your door because your party is too loud and the neighbors called to complain. This is a lose-lose situation for both parties, but we recommend some of the following solutions to help you avoid issues and make it a win-win situation for all parties involved [no pun intended].

1. Nicely inform and check with your neighbor beforehand whether the date you are planning on throwing a party is okay with them. Let them know what hours you anticipate the party to last.

2. Leave your cell phone number with them, so that instead of knocking on your door, inevitably creating an awkward situation, your neighbors can call you.

3. If your neighbors contact you, try to lower the noise or ask people to leave. Seattle Noise ordinance allows the police to issue citations after 10pm on week days and 11pm on weekends.

   The bottom line is, some type of beforehand communication would drastically help you to maintain a good relationship with your neighbors and can help to avoid difficult situations in the future.

It's winter quarter, and we know what that means -- puddles, slippery sidewalks and grey skies galore! But before you head off to class, here are some tips to weather-proof your place.

**Prep Your Pad** -- Water pipes can often freeze and burst during the winter. To guarantee yourself a warm shower, make sure your landlord has sealed leaks and closed foundation vents, and know where your water shut-off valve is located. -- Clear leaves and debris away from street drains near your place to minimize flooding. -- Sign up for Seattle Public Utilities' *Curbwaste E-News* to get alerts on weather impacts to your services at [www.seattle.gov/lists](http://www.seattle.gov/lists).

**Prep Your Commute** -- The sad fact about busing in the winter is that you'll inevitably encounter delays. Travel times will be slower than usual during snowy or icy days, so dress appropriately and brace yourself for longer waits. -- If your regular service is delayed or rerouted, do you know what other buses would work for you? Sign up for Transit Alerts at [www.kingcounty.gov/metro/signup](http://www.kingcounty.gov/metro/signup). Get more tips like these from the Seattle Public Utilities service newsletters!