



Crime Prevention Tips and Tricks

Spring cleaning is in full swing, how getting organized can help with security

A Note from Major Hawkins Bureau of Community Policing Commander, Brentwood Police

May is here and spring cleaning is in full swing at the Hawkins' house... and office... and vehicle... I'm *obsessed* with decluttering and organizing. It simplifies my life, calms my anxiety, and is actually helpful as a crime prevention tool. You may be thinking this is a little far-fetched, but stay with me. Not only do I wish for everyone in Brentwood to experience the joy of a clutter-free life, but I also wish everyone in Brentwood to be safe and happy!

Since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have been spending a lot more time in our homes. If you are already like me, you've seized this opportunity to declutter your home – inside and out. What are the benefits to this, you may ask. Great question. Let's dive in. Take your garage and closet for example. Both locations are great places to hide clutter or extra items that we don't quite know what to do with. These are also two locations in your home where you may store valuable items such as jewelry, cash, weapons, vehicles, and tools.

Let's start in the closet: Simply put, it is easier to retrieve items of importance and value if you have a designated and organized spot for them. Additionally, if any of these items go missing, it is far easier to notice their absence in a clutter-free environment. Added bonus: the **Brentwood Goodwill is now accepting donations** 😊



The garage is an easy place to store tools, sports equipment, lawn equipment, etc. Let's not forget garages are meant to store vehicles too! Does your garage look like the one in this picture? How nice would it be to be able to actually park in your garage? Not only would

you get the benefits of getting rid of a lot of clutter and unused household items (again, Brentwood Goodwill accepts donations), AND you would be able to place your vehicle in a secure location. Vehicle related thefts are on the rise, and we should do everything we can to protect our belongings. If anyone wants help cleaning out their garage so they can park in it and secure their vehicle, just call me.

Another form of spring cleaning comes outside of the home in the form of lawn care and property maintenance. As excited as I get about organizing and decluttering, I also get a thrill out of beautifully landscaped homes. Not just because they are aesthetically pleasing, which many of our Brentwood homes are, but having a tidy lawn or outside area can help in crime prevention measures as well.

For example, large, bulky bushes and plants can provide a



place for someone to hide or move about undetected, especially when it is dark outside. Trimming foliage and bushes to a reasonable size generally means you

could not hide a 32 gallon trash can behind the plant.

A well-kept lawn with accent or landscape lighting can also enhance the effectiveness of security camera footage by keeping a clear and well-lit line of sight.

Again, take the time to take care of yourselves and to improve upon your safety by taking some of these simple steps. As always, stay safe and call 911 if you see anything suspicious. ☆