



# Porcelain Press

PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABORATORY

## Combat Crime With Common Sense



Personal safety should never be taken for granted. To avoid becoming the victim of a crime, pay attention to your surroundings when you're at home, on the road, on travel or at work. Here are some security tips to keep in mind.

"Thieves target unstable-looking doors they can easily kick down," says Detective Shon Small with the Benton County Sheriff's Department. He suggests installing a high-quality deadbolt lock and replacing the screws along the door frame and doorstop with several 3-1/2-inch screws. And always lock your exterior doors whenever you go out—even if you'll just be gone a few minutes—and while you're at home, particularly at night.

Whenever a salesperson comes to call, ask to see their business license. Beware of door-to-door magazine salespeople—typically they are scam artists scheming to pocket your money or use your personal check to steal your identity. Sometimes, they'll try to get inside your house to steal prescription drugs or other items. Recently, four people were arrested for selling door-to-door magazine subscriptions without a business license in Richland and Kennewick (3H027).

Make sure your home is secure when you are traveling—lock all deadbolts, put the lights on timers, stop newspaper delivery, and have your mail held at the post office or collected by a trusted neighbor who has your travel schedule.

According to Detective Small, one of the most important ways to prevent a burglary or assault is to always lock your car. When approaching your parked car, have your keys in hand and scan the interior of your car to make sure no one is inside your car before you enter. As soon as you get in, lock all your doors.

Finally, if you are working late at night or on a weekend and do not feel comfortable walking to your vehicle alone, contact the PNNL Operations Center non-emergency line at 375-2154 to request a Security escort. The Operations Center staff will do their best to arrive in a timely manner and get you to your vehicle safely.

## Don't Give Germs the Upper Hand

Okay, so we all know the importance of washing our hands throughout the day. But knowing and doing are two different things. In 2005, the American Society for Microbiology conducted a hand washing survey and discovered that an estimated 1 out of 5 people don't wash their hands after using the restroom. And that was just the restroom—think about all the things you touched today, from the telephone to the toilet!

According to the Mayo Clinic, if you don't wash your hands frequently, you can infect yourself with the germs you come in contact with by touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Then, those germs can be spread to others by touching them or by touching surfaces that they also touch. Infectious diseases that are commonly spread through hand-to-hand contact include the common cold, flu, and several gastrointestinal disorders (3G287).

Inadequate hand hygiene also contributes to food-related illnesses, such as salmonella and *E. coli* infection. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as many as 76 million Americans get a foodborne illness each year.

### Here are the how-to's of proper hand washing from CDC:

- Wet your hands with warm, running water and apply liquid soap or use clean bar soap. Lather well.
- Rub your hands vigorously together for at least 15-20 seconds.
- Scrub all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, wrists, and between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Dry your hands with a clean or disposable towel.
- Use a towel to turn off the faucet.

In addition to the proper hand washing techniques, consider using a paper towel to open the restroom door instead of your bare hands, especially when exiting a public restroom. Remember the importance of frequent hand washing and covering your cough and sneezes to help prevent the spread of germs to others. When covering your cough and sneezes, make sure you use a tissue. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or the crook of your elbow, not into your hands.

## Annual VPP Survey

Thank you to over 2,100 staff members who participated in the annual VPP survey. If you chose to receive a recognition award, you will receive it in mid-March. The survey results can be found on the VPP website at <http://vpp.pnl.gov/about/survey.asp>.