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**THE SALEM CITY  
CRIME PREVENTION  
CONNECTION**

CHIEF BRAD S. JAMES  
www.pondtown.org

PRESENTED BY THE SALEM CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
30 WEST 100 SOUTH SALEM, UT 84653 (801) 423-2312

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## Home Security 101 - Your Own Home Protection System

You may have one of the very best home protection systems around and not even realize it. And the best part? It's free! Trusted neighbors are an important part of your home protection strategy, especially those that are home during the day, overnight, or other periods when you are not present. Neighbors can be the eyes of protection if they know what to look for.

If you have a trustworthy neighbor, talk with them about keeping an eye on your home when you are away. Let them know (generally) when to expect you or other authorized persons at your home so that if they see unusual activity when you are not home, there is something to be suspicious about.

Most importantly, provide your neighbor with telephone numbers that you can be reached at, and it's always a great idea to provide at least one back up number to another responsible family member or friend in the event you can't be reached and there is an emergency at your home.

Be sure to talk with your neighbor about your expectations of what action you would like them to take in the event of a suspicious happening at your home. Let them know if and when you should be notified. If you have provided your trusted neighbor with a key to your home, be sure to remind them to NOT label the key (in the event someone were to break into their home and find the key to YOUR home).



## SURVIVAL - How Would You React to an Assault?

Surviving a personal assault or other attack begins with planning. When such an incident occurs there usually is not time to assess the situation in detail to determine the best answer or response. Instead, every moment counts and an effective escape is impacted greatly by how fast and appropriate the victim responds.

The chances of becoming a victim of an assault are slim. However, preparation and thinking through "how would I respond" before something does happen, is your best chance at survival. A plan for reaction is what you need.

Imagine if someone were to jump out of the bushes and attempt to pull you in; how would you react?

Probably, your first instinct would be to scream and yell for help, which is a good start, but what's needed is an **immediate, direct and explosive physical response**. A startling and shocking response can, in many cases, stun the attacker and provide you with a moment or two for escape. Kicking or kneeing a male in the groin as well as poking at the eyes or thrusting your palm into their nose are all excellent responses that can provide that stunning blow. Improvised weapons can also be effective, such as a set of keys that can be thrust into someone's eyes or an umbrella or a shopping bag containing hard or glass items.

Catching the person who committed the crime is of great importance to public safety, but your escape is what matters most at that moment. You should make your escape at the very first opportunity. Head to where there are other people who can assist you and call for emergency services. Run to a house that appears to have someone at home and ask for help. Most importantly, get as far away, as fast as possible, from the perpetrator.

The situation becomes more challenging if the suspect has a weapon such as a knife or gun. In these cases, the response needs to be tempered with the knowledge that an "accidental" pull of the trigger could happen or an involuntary movement of the hand containing the knife could occur. Consequently, our reaction tactic probably needs to be altered. Think of what would be a "turn-off" for the assailant. Comments about other people coming into the area, pointing out a police car, talk of disease or a menstrual cycle; all of these can impact the attacker's desire and encourage them to let you go.

Planning and practicing your reaction plan is important to survival. But it's impossible to predict or identify every scenario or the very best way to respond in every situation. Having a general idea of what you (and your family) would do in most circumstances may be just the recipe to escape. Take time to think about and discuss things that could happen and make sure you and all members of your family are as prepared as possible.



### To Do and Not To Do

- Do everything possible to **NOT** go with the assailant if they want to leave the area. This can lead to an even worse outcome.
- DO NOT** go into areas that you know are unsafe.
- DO** keep your arms free of large loads of bags and other items; you can't react if your hands are full!
- DO** draw attention to your situation by yelling for help and flagging down passing pedestrians or motorists.

### Monthly 2DO List – Check your credit report

Some of the first signs of illegal use of your identity and credit can be detected by monitoring your credit.

Federal law allows all persons the opportunity to check their credit report free of charge, from all three credit-reporting bureaus once per year. You can obtain your free credit report by going to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call them at (877) 322-8228.

If you notice something in your report that is in error, immediately contact the bureau with the listed error and they will provide direction on your next steps for reporting the error and placing an alert on your credit.



## Disasters Can Happen, Are You Prepared?

### A significant earthquake on the east coast? Not likely, but it happened last month!

Almost weekly we hear of another disaster, sometimes in our country and sometimes a world away. These are all reminders of what can and does occur. Being prepared for an unexpected natural (or human-caused) disaster is what can make the difference between surviving or becoming a part of the disaster.

The safety of your family begins with having an emergency family plan. If each family member were in a different location at the time of a disaster, would everyone know what to do and where to go? Certainly, you would be concerned for the welfare of each other and that worry would grow with every minute out of contact. Expect that in some disasters you may not be able to make contact via phone, at least not directly to one another. Set up a plan to have the affected family members, when able to use phones, call a designated family member who lives out of state and report their status. That way, as each family member calls in, they can get an update on one another and leave messages or other information.

Prepare to take care of yourself! In a true disaster, as seen during the many natural disasters of the last few years, emergency services are stretched very thin and residents must rely on their own supply of food and water. Store supplies in a secure place with plenty of water (an average adult needs approximately 1 gallon of water per day) and food to sustain all family members for no less than three days (for an evacuation event) and up to a two week supply for disasters in which you will remain in your home.

Keep a battery powered radio and extra batteries so that if the power supply is impacted, you can still hear instructions from emergency services through public radio broadcasts.

The very best rule of thumb is to imagine a situation where you are not able to receive any food, water or other supplies for several days; what would you need to survive and do you have it available? Don't forget to check your emergency supplies regularly to ensure they are still edible and able to be used.



### Other items your survival kit should include:

- Blankets
- Flashlights and spare batteries
- Extra clothing
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Cooking equipment
- Basic medical supplies
- Prescribed medications
- Baby supplies

View a complete list at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)



**American  
Red Cross**

For more ideas on disaster preparedness visit the American Red Cross at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or reach them by phone at **1-800-REDCROSS**.



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