PREVENTING PACKAGE DELIVERY THEFT

On average, the Washington County Sheriff’s Office receives complaints of package delivery thefts about once per month. However, during November and December, those complaints always go up due to the amount of items being ordered via the Internet for holiday gift giving. The majority of these packages are delivered straight to the customer’s door, even if no one is home to accept them.

Unfortunately, this is also the time of year that brings out individuals who are looking for crimes of opportunity, as well as criminals that actually target delivery trucks in neighborhoods. Thieves will follow or watch for FedEx, UPS, US Mail and other delivery trucks and then target a home after a delivery is made. To reduce the chances of being victimized by package delivery thieves, our Crime Prevention Specialists offer the following advice:

- Choose a shipping option that requires you to sign for delivery.
- Check delivery status online so you can try to be home when the package arrives. Some retailers even offer text messages to your cell phone to alert you when items have been delivered.
- On the expected day of arrival, post a note on your door asking the delivery service to leave the package with a trusted neighbor.
- Arrange to have the package shipped to another location where someone can receive it. This could be your workplace, a friend or relative’s home, or even the local "mailbox" business that may agree to accept shipment of your item for a fee.
- Ask the delivery service to hold your package for customer pick-up at their local shipping facility.
- If you do not receive your shipment on time, check with the company of origin and confirm the delivery. If the item was delivered and you did not receive it, report the theft or loss to the original company, the shipping company, and the Washington County Sheriff’s Office at 503-629-0111.
- Many of these crimes occur during broad daylight. As always, be alert about suspicious behavior in your neighborhood, especially if you see a delivery truck making the rounds and a vehicle following behind or unfamiliar subjects on foot, following the truck route. Be prepared to call non-emergency dispatch to report this type of suspicious activity or call 9-1-1 if you observe a crime in progress.