



Monthly Newsletter

August 2025

Prevent window smash-ins

On July 11, a homeowner on Claydon Way in the Wilhaggin neighborhood was burglarized by two people who smashed the rear sliding glass door to gain entry.

In recent years, similar burglaries were reported in the Sierra Oaks neighborhood just west of Watt Avenue. Smashing the glass in doors and windows works because it generally will not activate a house alarm unless the connection between the door frame and the sensors is broken.

Protect the glass

How can you protect your home from this type of burglary? One solution is to install security window film over any large window or glass patio door.

In 2017, WDDNA Communications Director Kathleen Newton invested in security film at her home and wrote about it for our newsletter. Following is her report:

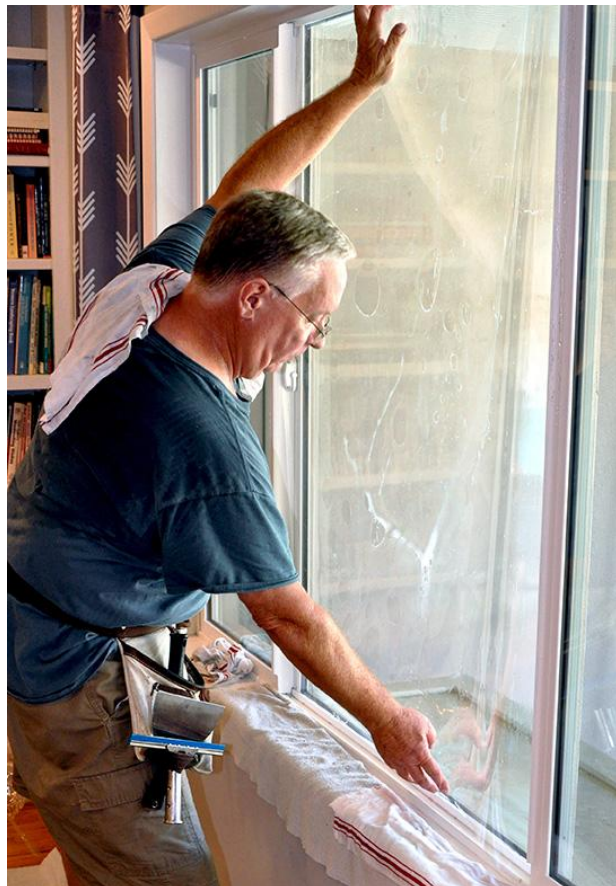
By Kathleen Newton

I studied the various options for the film. Some of the light-weight versions can be installed as a DIY project. But we preferred to have it professionally done by a local contractor.

Dave Tennow of Sac Tint Shop installed a 7 mil Solar Gard film on our sliding patio door and a large rear window. We could have used a less expensive 4 mil thickness, but decided to get the heavier weight for maximum effect. We also could have chosen a tinted version to block sunlight, but that was not necessary in our situation.

Tennow said none of his residential installations have ever had a successful break-in through the glass. "It is very effective for security. I've installed it in law enforcement offices and commercial buildings for years," he said.

The process for our installation took a little over an hour. The film is installed



on the inside of windows and doors.

Tennow first cleaned the glass. Then he cut the film slightly larger than the pane of glass and sprayed the glass with a soapy solution. He removed the backing on the film to expose its adhesive side and applied the film to the moistened glass. Finally, he squeegeed the window to force out all the solution and trimmed the excess film along the edges of the window frame.

The result is a totally invisible protective surface that also has the benefit of cutting out 99% of the UV rays from the sun.

We now have the peace of mind in knowing that any burglar who tries to get in by smashing through the glass will have a noisy struggle on his hands and likely will decide to look elsewhere for an easier target.



Fire hydrant fashion

A WDDNA member recently reported that a fire hydrant in the McClarren Drive area has occasionally been adorned with various humorous fashion accessories, including hats, dark glasses and color-coordinated garments. (See photos.)

The member asked: "Is it legal to decorate a fire hydrant? We would think that modifying the appearance of a fire hydrant could potentially hinder firefighters in an emergency situation."

In response, we contacted Capt. Mark Nunez, public information officer for Sacramento Metro Fire, and a staff member at Sacramento Suburban Water District, which manages the fire hydrants. Both of them were very amused, but they both agreed that dressing up a fire hydrant is not exactly illegal.

What is illegal is painting a fire hydrant or attaching things to it that would make it somehow unusable. Both the officials said that clothing on a hydrant would not inhibit a fire crew's ability to operate the hydrant. They would simply remove the items quickly and proceed with their work.

That said, it likely is best to avoid adding clothing that might make a hydrant difficult for fire crews to see in an emergency.

Barking dogs: A hairy problem

A WDDNA member recently asked us what could be done about barking dogs.

“The neighbors’ dogs bark constantly,” the member wrote. “What can be done?”

Sacramento County animal control officials report that barking dogs are among the most common and the most difficult problems they face. And, even though there is a county ordinance prohibiting loud and disturbing barking, citing a dog owner is problematic.



Sacramento County ordinance Title 8.08.050 reads: “No owner of any animal, wild or domestic, shall permit or suffer the animal to do any of the following: ... (3) Make loud or disturbing noises without provocation, including, but not limited to, chronic howling, yowling, barking, whining, or other utterances.”

It sounds definitive, but according to Bill Davidson with Sacramento County Animal Control, it doesn’t really work.

“The problem with the ordinance and getting it to court is the definition of what is ‘excessive barking,’” he explained. “What qualifies as excessive in one neighborhood may not be in another and the barking may bother one neighbor more than another. Judges are reluctant to make rulings on this problem because there are no precise standards for the degree of nuisance. So, resolving the problem is really dependent on how neighbors choose to handle it among themselves.”

What can be done?

This is not to say that County Animal Control officers can do nothing.

“When we get a report about a barking dog problem, we typically send the dog owner a form letter that lets the person know that there has been a complaint about their dog barking excessively,” Davidson explained. “The letter offers suggestions for how to control the dog and how to mediate the situation with neighbors. Or sometimes we will send an officer to the home to offer the same suggestions.

“If the complaint is repeated, we send a similar letter four or five times, weeks apart. But animal control cannot issue a citation because it is very difficult to establish what ‘excessive’ means,” he noted.

What if the letters don’t work?

According to Davidson, there is just one statutory option remaining for the neighbor. “The only alternative that remains is for the complaining neighbor to make a citizen’s arrest and issue a citation to the dog owner under public nuisance [Penal Code 370](#),” he said.

But it’s not quite that simple, he added.

“However, issuing this citation cannot be done without the support of the community affected by the nuisance. We interpret that community to be three households surrounding the source of the nuisance. So, the complainant must have the written support of two other neighboring residents. They must attest to the fact that they are fed up and ready to go to court over the situation.”

Does this work? Not really, according to Davidson.

“In reality, that rarely happens. In the past few years, I have only been called to two such court cases,” he recalled. “In one, the dog owner did not show up, so the judge issued the fine specified by the ordinance ... somewhere around \$200. In the second, the judge listened to all the parties involved, then ordered the dog’s owner to buy a bark collar to see if it would teach the dog not to bark and he said they should come back in six months to see if it worked.”

The ultimate solution

If all this is true, what’s a neighbor to do?

“In the past, I have occasionally written personal letters to the dog owner in hopes of encouraging them to work out the problem with their neighbors,” Davidson said. “I always try to get the neighbors involved to work out the process among themselves. That always seems to have the most success.”

However, Davidson offered one caveat: “I would not advise the neighbor to start out by telling the neighbor to shut his dog up. Instead, open with a friendly discussion, perhaps ask the dog’s name, talk about how much you like dogs, be cordial and gradually work up to a discussion about barking. If you go in with guns blazing, it likely won’t work out well.”

Cloud storage scam

From [Bureau of Consumer Protection](#)

You might get an email or text that seems to come from Apple, Microsoft or Google, saying you’re out of storage. The message may look legit, but is it? How can you be sure the link to upgrade isn’t a scam?

If you don’t even have cloud storage with the company emailing you, that’s the best clue that the message is a phishing scam. Just delete it.

But if the message comes from a company you do use for cloud storage, contact them directly. Don’t click the link in the message. Instead, use a number or website you know to be real. Or log into your cloud account to see if you really need more space.

Scammers often create phishing emails designed to trick you into clicking a link. Their goal is to steal your personal information or install malware on your device. So, if you suspect a phishing scam:

- Forward the email to the Anti-Phishing Working Group at reportphishing@apwg.org
- Report phishing text messages on the messaging app you use or forward the message text message to SPAM (7726).
- Report the phishing attempt to the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/secure/ftc/ReportFraud.ftc.gov).

What documents should you shred?

You’ve finished your 2024 taxes. Which documents should you keep, for how long and which should you shred?

According to the IRS, these are the suggested answers:

Keep for a year

- Bank statements
- Pay stubs
- Undisputed medical bills
- Credit card and utility bills
- Deposited checks

If you can access these documents electronically, consider shredding your paper copies.

Keep for at least three years

- Income tax returns
- Tax-related documents, like canceled checks, receipts, W-2s and 1099s
- Records related to selling a home

In some cases, the [IRS recommends](#) keeping tax returns and tax-related documents for longer than three years. If you can access these documents electronically, consider shredding your paper copies.

Keep while you own

- The title to your vehicle
- The title or deed to your home
- Documents related to mortgage or vehicle loans
- Home improvement receipts
- Rental agreements and leases
- Sales receipts and warranty information for major appliances

Keep forever and lock up

- Birth certificate or adoption papers
- Social Security cards
- Valid passports and citizenship or residency papers
- Marriage licenses and divorce decrees
- Military records
- Wills, living wills, powers of attorney, retirement and pension plans
- Death certificates of family members
- Vital health records (especially those that pre-date electronic health records)

Shred

- ATM receipts
- Offers of credit or insurance
- Cleared checks (after 14 days)
- Credit reports
- Prescription information for medicines you no longer take
- Expired warranties
- Expired credit cards, driver's licenses, and other forms of identification

When it's time to dispose of documents with your personal or financial information, shred them. If you don't have a shredder, look for a local shred day in your community.

Handy irrigation scheduler tool

The [Sacramento Regional Water Authority](#) (RWA) has a free website tool that will automatically calculate how long and how often you should run each zone in your irrigation system.

The tool, called the Smart Irrigation Scheduler, takes into account what type of soil, sun exposure, slope, wind, plants and/or lawn you have on each zone as well as the type of sprinklers or drip lines and emitters you have, then almost instantly tells you how to program the controller for each zone to provide adequate water to that area while also adhering to your water agency's watering day restrictions.

If you choose to, you can even register and store a complete irrigation system profile for

your property and consult it monthly to make adjustments for weather changes, then use the revised settings to adjust your system's settings.

The tool is located on the RWA's Be Water Smart website at <https://bewatersmart.info/>. RWA notes that the tool "is offered free of charge and covers the Sacramento Region only." It uses the zip code of your property to access current weather values from the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) website.

CIMIS is a program of the Water Use and Efficiency Branch, California Department of Water Resources (DWR), that manages a network of more than 145 automated weather stations in California. It was developed in 1982 by the DWR and the University of California at Davis to assist California's irrigators with managing their water resources efficiently.

To go directly to the Smart Irrigation Scheduler and tutorial videos, [CLICK HERE](#).

Member Q&A

Q: You recently published a story about replacing an old gate latch with one that could accept a code-activated padlock that would allow service people to open the gate while we are on vacation. Can you suggest a company that could install such a latch on our gate?

A: While WDDNA does not keep a referral list of service professionals, the latch we wrote about in that article could easily be installed by any competent handyman. In addition, there is a video on YouTube that illustrates how to install a version of that lock on a standard wooden fence gate. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch it.

HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department:

1. Call the Sheriff's Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff's Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff's Department non-emergency line).

GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it. The best way is via [EMAIL at wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com](mailto:wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com).



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