

Operation Golden

East Surrey Police will be launching Operation Golden on Tuesday, 2 November, to tackle the anticipated increase in distraction burglaries which usually occur during the winter months.

Officers from the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams and CID will work together to increase patrols in the areas most generally targeted by distraction burglars. The aim of the campaign, which will run through to January 2010, is to raise awareness of the methods used by a distraction burglar and to empower elderly and vulnerable members of our community to keep unwanted visitors out in the cold.

Here in Tandridge the neighbourhood team will as part of this campaign, work with our partners particularly those that provide services to the elderly and vulnerable by joint visits, talks to make them aware of the methods used by distraction burglars and advise them what to do when a stranger calls.

Surrey Police is also calling on members of the community to keep a watchful eye on elderly and vulnerable neighbours who may fall victim to burglars. If you see someone suspicious loitering around contact Surrey Police or perhaps challenge someone you don't recognise calling at an elderly neighbour's house.

The most common method used by a bogus caller is claiming to be a water board official. Others methods include posing as builders, charity workers, police officers and neighbourhood watch volunteers.

Those most at risk are also reminded to remember the golden rule: **if in doubt, keep them out.**

Theses simple steps will help reduce the possibility of being targeted by bogus callers.

- Before opening your door, check who is there and put the chain on
- If they are strangers, be sure to ask 'Who are you?' What do you want?'
- Always ask to see their identity card. Keep the chain on the door and check it carefully
- Take a note of the company, name and telephone number. If in doubt, phone the company and check. Genuine staff from utility companies won't mind waiting or will call back later
- The golden rule is '**if in doubt, keep them out**'. If you are at all concerned, call 999 immediately.