

## Report Suspicious Activities

- Suspicious persons who may be wandering in your neighborhood or near your neighbor's homes.
- Suspicious persons looking into windows, or trying door handles of homes and vehicles.
- Be alert for suspicious persons who knock on your door and ask unusual questions such as "What Street am I on?" It is not uncommon for a burglar to knock on the front door of a residence prior to burglarizing it to determine if the residence is occupied.
- If you do speak with a person you feel is suspicious, please be polite, avoid confrontation, and keep your conversation with them short. When safe, immediately contact the Hillsborough Police Department and report the incident.

## If Your Home Has Been Burglarized

- Do not go in or call out if you return home and suspect someone has broken into your home. Go to a neighbor's home and call the Hillsborough Police Department.
- Refrain from touching or cleaning any items in your home. Law enforcement officers are trained to identify, collect, and process evidence from simple to complex crime scenes.

For immediate updates, please follow HPD on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or through the San Mateo County Alert System.



**SMC Alert**  
San Mateo County Alert System



## Hillsborough Police Department Residential Burglary Information

**Hillsborough Police Department**  
**1600 Floribunda Avenue**  
**Hillsborough, CA 94010**

**Emergency: 9-1-1**  
**NON-Emergency: (650) 375-7470**

## Historical Burglary Information

The Town of Hillsborough has experienced an increase in residential burglaries. This experience is consistent with historical Hillsborough crime statistics. The crime of burglary usually occurs more often during the fall and winter months due to the increased hours of darkness.

In addition to those persons who reside locally and commit the crime of burglary, criminal tourism has become very prevalent in the United States, with many sophisticated burglary crews traveling from South America. These groups are also known as South American Theft Groups (SATG). They are transnational and target wealthy communities, committing thousands of burglaries in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Europe, India, and Australia.

The concept of criminal tourism and SATG groups is not new. These groups range in size from few to several dozen members. Groups often enter the United States legally. Once they arrive, groups will acquire vehicles by either renting or buying slightly used luxury vehicles to blend into targeted communities. Groups will then travel across the nation to different affluent communities to commit burglaries. These groups will change vehicles, license plates, cellular telephone SIM cards, and use fraudulent identification cards, and rotate members out of the country in a matter of weeks to evade law enforcement.

In 2015, Canadian Law Enforcement officials and The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) made the discovery that SATG was committing residential burglaries. The Hillsborough Police Department's Investigations Bureau first associated SATG to Hillsborough burglaries in late 2018 and 2019. In 2021, a SATG member was identified as a suspect in three Hillsborough burglaries.

## Burglary Prevention Strategies

This section contains popular strategies for deterring residential burglaries and other property crimes. These tips will significantly enhance the security of your home and property.

- Have an alarm installed and properly maintained. Consider installing sensors on windows and glass break sensors. Burglars have recently been entering windows in addition to glass doors to avoid activating alarms. While audible alarm activation will not necessarily prevent a burglary, it frequently prevents the ransacking of an entire home. Most burglars will only target the master bedroom of a residence if they are aware of an alarm activation. Some groups are scared off by audible alarm activation. Always arm your alarm. Residents frequently tell Officers they do not utilize their alarm due to fear of false alarm charges. For this reason, **Hillsborough Police Chief Doug Davis suspended false alarm charges in 2019.**
- Install security laminate on windows and glass doors. Most burglars will break glass windows and doors to access a residence. Glass is typically broken within seconds by a window punch tool, a rock, or any other blunt force object. Glass laminate is effective as a deterrent as it will significantly increase the amount of force and time required to break into your home.
- Lock all doors and windows. Use deadbolts, dowels, or locking pins in sliding glass doors and windows to keep them from being pried open. Burglars will check for unlocked doors and windows. Burglars have also entered homes through unlocked second-story doors and windows that were left unsecured.

## Burglary Prevention Strategies (Cont.)

- If you have security cameras, please ensure they are recording, and be aware of the retention period for your device(s). The Hillsborough Police Department encourages residents to periodically review their security footage as they may discover suspicious activity which may have gone otherwise undetected.
- Please invest in a high-quality safe to secure valuables, documents, and firearms. Safes should be secured to a wall stud or cement to increase the difficulty of removing it from a residence.
- Hillsborough Officers occasionally encounter unsecured firearms while checking homes during burglary alarm activations. Please secure firearms unloaded and in a safe.
- Leave exterior lights on after dark or have outside lights controlled by a motion detector. Make sure there are no dark areas around the house, garage, or yard in which a person could hide.
- Make sure your street address number is clearly visible from the street and is illuminated at night. This will aid law enforcement and other emergency personnel in locating your home.

These recommendations represent a small list of options that will provide additional protection of your home against burglaries and other types of crime. For a more comprehensive list please visit our [Town website](http://www.hillsborough.net/393/Home-Security-Check-Program) at [www.hillsborough.net/393/Home-Security-Check-Program](http://www.hillsborough.net/393/Home-Security-Check-Program).