

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE

CHRISTMAS SAFETY TIPS



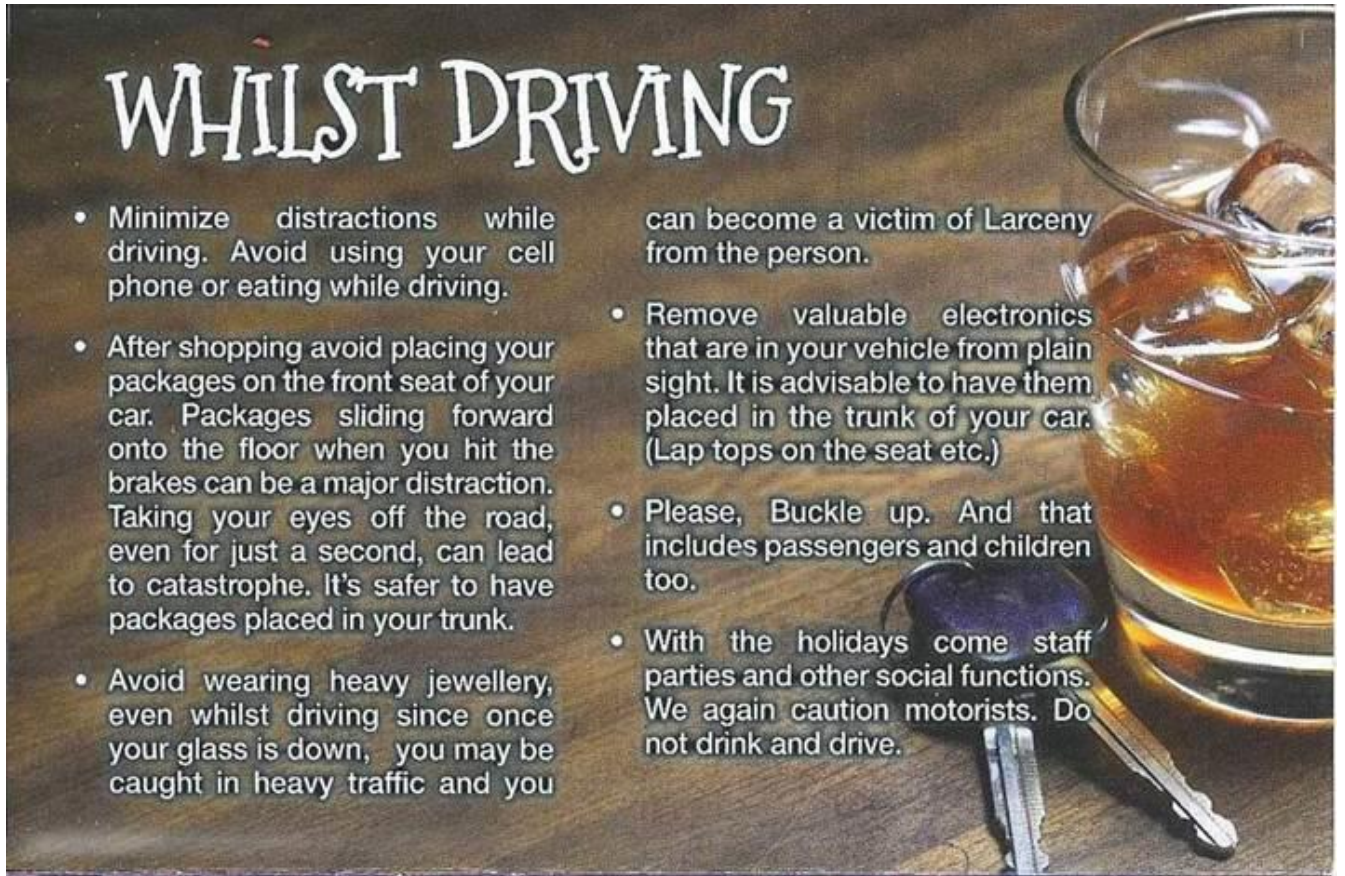
OPERATING A BUSINESS

- Given the increase in shopping for the holidays, business owners might be inclined to take on additional staff. When taking on temporary assistance, be sure to run a thorough background check on the persons you are hiring. Ask for proper identification.
- Alternate the times and methods of making cash deposits... You must not adopt a set pattern.
- Utilize additional security when making large deposits.
- Be aware of strange persons or vehicles around your business premises especially at opening and closing hours.



WHILST DRIVING

- Minimize distractions while driving. Avoid using your cell phone or eating while driving.
- After shopping avoid placing your packages on the front seat of your car. Packages sliding forward onto the floor when you hit the brakes can be a major distraction. Taking your eyes off the road, even for just a second, can lead to catastrophe. It's safer to have packages placed in your trunk.
- Avoid wearing heavy jewellery, even whilst driving since once your glass is down, you may be caught in heavy traffic and you can become a victim of Larceny from the person.
- Remove valuable electronics that are in your vehicle from plain sight. It is advisable to have them placed in the trunk of your car. (Lap tops on the seat etc.)
- Please, Buckle up. And that includes passengers and children too.
- With the holidays come staff parties and other social functions. We again caution motorists. Do not drink and drive.





WHILST SHOPPING

- While Christmas is a season for caring and sharing, if you feel compelled to donate, be aware of fictitious so-called "needy cases" which persons with ulterior motives may approach you to support. If on the spot donations are to be made be careful in opening your wallets and purses to hand over cash.
 - Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of the year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings. Be on the look-out for forged 20 dollar and 100 dollar bills.
 - To discourage purse-snatchers and pick-pocketers don't overburden yourself with packages.
 - Watch for people who may bump into you or try to distract you in some other way. They may be setting you up for pick-pocketing. - Charlotte Street, City Gate and other crowded areas.
 - Avoid wearing excessive jewellery whilst shopping especially in crowded shopping areas.
 - Do not use Video arcades, toy stores, or a movie theatre as a baby sitter. Predators may be on the prowl looking for unattended kids at this
- them within your view. If you send your children to another department of the store, be sure that an adult is with them. A name tag with pertinent information may be attached to the clothing of the child.
- To prepare for the event that you do become separated from your children during the shopping trip, it is advisable to provide them with a cell phone to call you and ask your location in the store. Set up a predetermined spot for such instances.
 - If you go to an automatic teller machine for cash, avoid withdrawing large sums. Check for people around and make sure it is well lit and in a safe location.



AT HOME

- With the Christmas season, home-owners are often engaged in cleaning and beautifying their home. Beware of persons who may come to your home requesting to assist in performing odd jobs around. If you hire someone to perform any job around your house, ensure that you know who they are and there is always someone at home to monitor their movements.
- Avoid leaving ladders or scaffoldings hanging around after paint jobs or other home repairs are completed since they can allow easy access to your premises.
- If you are spending the Christmas season abroad or away from your home, you need to properly secure your home. Use an inexpensive light timer when you are away and ask a neighbour to pick up your newspapers.



- Burglars know to look for the hidden door key near the front entrance. Don't hide spare keys under rocks, in flowerpots, or above door ledges.
- Beware of the "good deal" scams. Things are not always what they appear to be. Beware of persons selling stolen items. You can be charged for the offence of Receiving Stolen goods.
- Trust your instincts. If you have an intuitive feeling something is wrong or suspicious, react immediately and take action to reduce your risk of becoming a victim.

