

# INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Office of the Coroner for Laramie County and the Laramie County Law Enforcement community, we extend our deepest sympathy for your recent loss and our sincere hope that you will find comfort with your family and friends during this time of grief.

Our goal is to inform you through this crime prevention brochure about unfortunate events that have occurred during times when people are overcome with grief and preoccupied with major family decisions.

From a law enforcement perspective, criminal acts are usually divided into two categories: "Crimes of Passion" and "Crimes of Opportunity."

The information in this brochure is designed to assist in reducing the chance that you or your family may become a victim of a crime of opportunity during your bereavement.

Criminals may have the intent and the ability to commit a crime. You can help prevent yourself from becoming victimized by taking away their opportunity.

*Martin A. Luna*  
*Laramie County Coroner*



Laramie County Sheriff's Department  
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Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001  
307-633-4700



Cheyenne Police Department  
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Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001  
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**LARAMIE COUNTY  
OFFICE OF THE CORONER**  
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Avoid becoming a  
**Crime  
Victim**

During your time of  
bereavement



A public service of the Office of the  
Coroner for Laramie County, Laramie  
County Sheriff's Department and  
Cheyenne Police Department

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT BECOMING A VICTIM?

In the obituary columns of most newspapers information such as name and community of surviving members, times and locations of services are listed. This practice, although helpful to readers, sometimes creates additional vulnerabilities for family members.

Ask a trusted friend to stay at your home during times you will be attending funeral services. If no one is available, ask a neighbor. In many cases they are looking for some way to assist you during these times and this may be the best way they can help.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, MEMBERS OF YOUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES OR THE LARAMIE COUNTY CORONER ARE READY AND WILLING TO ASSIST YOU.**

## AVOID SCAMS THAT TARGET THE BEREAVED.



Criminals often target families who have recently lost a loved one. Be careful not to become too trusting of strangers. There are countless cases where confidence scams and swindles are perpetuated against trusting people during very emotional times. One of the best crime prevention techniques involves "slowing down the process." Ask specific questions about offers made on behalf of your loved one.

Never provide personal information such as social security numbers, credit card numbers, bank account information, or other numbers to anyone calling on the telephone, via the Internet or through unsolicited mail.

Never pay bills on behalf of the deceased unless you can verify the transaction actually took place. Bogus invoices can be sent to the home of a deceased assuming the individual handling the estate will simply pay them without question.

Ask specific questions and have other family members or an estate lawyer involved in decision making.

Never open your home to individuals claiming they can provide free appraisals of the deceased's valuables. Reputable businesses will never "cold call" prospective clients during these times.

Set your interior lights to operate on a timer. You may also want to leave a radio or television on just loud enough to be heard outside of your home.

Leave your car parked in the driveway of your home and ride to funeral services with a friend.

Do not stop mail or newspapers being delivered to your home. Ask a friend or neighbor to collect them daily while you are away.

Telephone answering machines are helpful tools. They can allow you to screen calls. Also, if you use a cellular phone, consider "call-forwarding" your home phone to your cell. Answer as if you are home.

If you are a female living alone and use an answering machine, consider having a male voice recorded on your message. Use "WE" as opposed to "I" on your recorded message.

Avoid telling the caller you are not home right now. That may enhance the chances your home may be burglarized.

**Creating the impression that someone is home may prevent you from being the victim of a burglary.**

