**Solicitor Safety Guidelines**

**1. Acknowledge you are home:** When someone knocks at your door, acknowledge you are home. Talk through the door without opening it. If you don't answer, and it happens to be a criminal they may attempt to break into your home.

**2. Do not feel obligated to open the door:** You are not obligated to open the door to anyone. If they say there is a car problem, offer to call their road service for them. If it is an accident, call 9-1-1 for them. The idea is to keep them outside and you make the call for them. Ask them to stand by while you place the call. If the person stays, it is a good chance that they are legitimate; however, if they leave quickly, it is probably a con.

**3. Insist on identification:** Identification should always be verified BEFORE opening the door. Insist they disclose their name, company and the product or service represented. Service representatives should have appointments and not just "show up" at your door. Also, make sure to install a wide angle viewer in your door, so you have a better view – you can buy them at any hardware store.

**4. Call if the person is persistent or if something seems “off”:** While some solicitors are legitimate, it is also a tactic used by criminals to ‘case’ neighborhoods, looking for easy targets. Be aware that criminals will often be carrying backpacks and cell phones. People who are lying often give too many details, touch their face a lot, or keep looking away. Experienced con men will also send younger kids into the neighborhood to do the knocking, knowing that a child will not draw the suspicion that an adult might.

**5. Get a description:** Start at the head and then work down to the feet. What is the race, hair color/length, facial hair? Do they have a hat? What color shirt? What color pants? Are there other details, like a logo on the shirt? How tall are they (compare them to a family member.) Look for other details; distinguishing features, direction of travel, another person, a vehicle and get the license number. Write down the information.

**6. Help police connect the dots:** If anything seems strange or suspicious**, CALL!**

Why? Because criminals move around and calling in things that seem suspicious can help the police connect the dots. Maybe the police have had reports of another person matching this description in another neighborhood. Maybe somebody a few streets over reported that same car. Maybe other neighbors have reported the same fake company going door-to-door to their APD representative.

**Call 911** - if it is happening now. "I just had a solicitor on my door and he could not show me a company card and kept asking questions about things he shouldn’t have asked."

**Call 311** - you want the police to be aware of something, but it’s not an urgent matter. "My neighbor just told me there was a young man who knocked his door last night, He was driving a white Ford truck and he seemed too persistent or There is a blue Honda Accord that has been driving around our streets for a couple of days.”