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Holiday Shopping Safety and Security

Tips for Holiday Season Shopping at the Malls and Online

SANTA ANA, California (November 24, 2008) – Universal Protection Service (UPS), the largest provider of security services to the commercial real estate market in Southern California and one of the nation's top 10 largest uniform protection companies, is offering tips to consumers regarding holiday shopping safety and security at the mall and online.

Economic woes and job uncertainty will undoubtedly make this holiday season more stressful and increase the potential for crime, theft and other fraud. Millions of Americans will be hitting the stores during the next few weeks, starting with the busiest shopping day of the year - the Friday after Thanksgiving, or "Black Friday." To help keep your holidays safe and happy, UPS offers the following tips for mall and online shoppers.

Shopping at Stores or Malls:

- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages.
- Take extra care with purses and wallets; carry your purse close to your body and your wallet in an inside pocket or zippered pocket.
- Never leave your purse unattended in a shopping cart, on a countertop or in your car.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash and minimize the number of debit or credit cards you carry, to avoid leaving them at a store.
- Park your car close to your destination and make sure packages are locked in the trunk, out of sight. If you are going to continue shopping, after placing items in the trunk, move your vehicle to another location in the parking lot.
- Try to shop during daylight hours and when shopping at night, park in a well-lit area.
- When returning to your car, have your keys out and keep alert. Lock your doors as soon as you are inside the vehicle.
- Shop with others when possible.
- If shopping with small children, make sure they know what to do if they become separated from you inside a store or mall.
- Report suspicious activity to store/mall security or law enforcement.

Holiday Shopping Online

Online shopping is expected to exceed \$75 billion in 2008, and the next two months accounts for more than 1/3 of all online shopping. Fast-moving fraudsters are aggressively seeking to steal a bigger portion of that sales figure by targeting online shoppers directly, and the recent economic downturn has created an increased risk of vendor bankruptcies and delivery hurdles.

Follow These Online Shopping Tips:

- Shop with known businesses; research regarding past performance and recent financial stability.
- Obtain a phone number, address and/or other alternate contact to resolve problems.
- Never provide your Social Security number or driver's license number online, this information is not needed to make a purchase.



- Conduct transactions on a secure server only; look for the pad-lock device on the browser's status bar. The URL should change from http to shttp or https when asked for payment information indicating that the purchase is encrypted or secured.
- Make sure you understand all shipping charges, taxes and delivery dates.
- Have packages delivered to an address where they won't be left unattended
- Read the site's privacy policy to learn how it uses and shares your personal information.
- Understand return policies before you buy, verify limitation for time, shipping costs and other policies
- Read the seller's product description closely. Name-brand items at greatly reduced prices could be counterfeit.
- Secure your computer with anti-virus and anti-spyware software, and firewalls that are updated regularly
- Keep a paper trail. Print and save records of your online transactions, including the product description and price, the online receipt and copies of any email you exchange with the seller.
- Read your credit card statements as soon as you get them to make sure there aren't any unauthorized charges.

For more security tips, visit: http://www.universalpro.com/Security_Tips_11-30-05.htm

About Universal Protection Service

Founded in 1965, Universal Protection Service (UPS) combines an innovative mix of tradition with cutting edge systems and technology to keep pace with the ever-evolving needs of today's business environments. Headquartered in Santa Ana, Calif. with offices located throughout Arizona, California, Colorado and Washington, UPS employs hands-on, highly experienced management teams and continuous training to deliver consistent, high quality security solutions. UPS is a division of Universal Services of America, which also includes Universal Building Maintenance, UPS Security Systems and UPS Fire/Life Safety Services. (PPO# 14417)

For more information visit our web site at <http://www.universalpro.com>