

## Extension Tip of the Week

Iowa has a lower level of crime compared to the national average and that is good news. Our state even has a lower rate than the Midwest average. We also know that residences or farms were the top targets for burglaries, accounting for about 65 percent of the all the burglaries in 2007. Join the simple efforts to deter, delay, and deny criminals from committing burglary on your acreage and/or home.

The first action is to get secure. Have secure deadbolts installed on all external doors to your home, barns, and other buildings on the property. But having them installed is only half of the effort – you must use them all the time to be effective. It is also important to add commercially available locks for any sliding glass doors or use a rod in the track to prevent burglars from prying it open.

Windows are the next entry point of burglars so examine your windows. Adding a sliding bolt or screw connection improves double-hung window security. You need to pay extra attention to basement windows. Windows at ground or below ground level are easy access points for burglars.

Then check your lights. Keep your home, driveway, barns, and other buildings illuminated at night. Nobody wants spotlights on your property all night so consider motion sensors that active light when there is activity. Bright lights and good illumination makes criminals think twice about approaching because they don't wish to be seen. It is also a good idea to use timers on several indoor lights in the home giving the appearance that someone is at home.

(Taken from *Rural Security* in the March 2009 issue of **Acreage Living**)