

New Brochure Offers Advice on How to Avoid Being the Victim of a Crime During Your Time of Grief

Albany, NY -- October 31 -- Because criminals often target families who have recently lost a loved one, the New York State Funeral Directors Association (NYSFDA) and the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police (NYSACOP) have teamed up to produce a brochure entitled, "Avoid Being the Victim of a Crime During Your Time of Grief."

The brochure explains that criminals are always on the lookout for opportunities to break into a home or scam a trusting person especially during emotional times after the loss of a loved one. They regularly scan obituary columns in newspapers that can give them clues when a home will be empty during funeral events.

Some of the tips in the brochure that you can use to prevent becoming a victim are: ask a trusted friend or neighbor to stay in your home during the time you will be away for funeral services; leave your car parked in the driveway and set your interior lights to operate on a timer.

Many scams are directed at the recently bereaved. Never provide personal information to anyone calling on the telephone; via the internet or through unsolicited mail. Never pay bills on the behalf of the deceased unless you can verify the transaction actually took place, or open your door to coin/stamp "collectors" or estate sales "representatives" offering to do a free appraisal of the deceased's valuables.

According to John Sommese, NYSFDA's president, "This is an exciting collaboration for us working with law enforcement officials to provide yet another valuable service for families who are grieving over the loss of a loved one. This is the first brochure of its kind that we have ever been a part of."

"Whenever a family loses a loved one, the last thing they should have to worry about is a thief taking advantage of the situation," says NYSACOP Executive Director John Grebert. "Remember that whenever a household is empty for a period of time, it's always a good idea to ask your neighbors to watch your house, and to notify your local police department and ask them to pay some additional attention to your home. It could save you from further loss."

Many more suggestions are contained in the brochure which consumers can download from NYSFDA's Website www.nysfda.org and clicking on "consumer information" and then "crime victim brochure". The brochure is also available by sending a stamped, self-addressed size 10 business envelope to: "Avoid Being the Victim of a Crime" Brochure, NYS Funeral Directors Association, 426 New Karner Road, Albany, NY 12205.

The New York State Funeral Directors Association is comprised of 740 funeral firms dedicated to enhancing the environment in which its members operate, and promoting the highest standards of funeral service to the public.

The New York State Association of Chiefs of Police is a not for profit organization numbering more than 500 Chiefs of Police dedicated to the maintenance of law and order, and protecting the citizens of New York State.

Editor's Note: For more information, or to schedule an interview please call Vera Nuspliger at 518-882-9816 or Randy McCullough at 518-452-8230.