

SCAM REPORT
MILTON TOWNSHIP S.A.L.T. COUNCIL MEETING JULY 8, 2024

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Crimes Encountered by Travelers

1. Bag Snatching

a. Thieves look for distracted tourists wearing shoulder bags in crowded areas. When a potential victim is spotted, the thief casually walks by, grabs the bag, and runs off.

Solution: Wear your bag crossbody-style, with the strap over one shoulder and the bag on the opposite hip.

b. In restaurants and bars, bags and purses are often slung over the backs of chairs. A thief walks by, grabs the bag, and flees while the owner is distracted. If the bag is on the floor, the thief kicks it a short distance, bends down to pick it up, and casually walks away.

Solution: Secure your bag to the table or chair with a wire-loop lock. Thieves who do not see the lock will run off when they feel the resistance from pulling on the bag.

2. Bag Slashing: Thieves slice open the bottom of a tourist's bag with a knife or scissors to steal valuables. When a bag is slashed, the contents fall to the ground and are quickly scooped up by the thief who runs off. This crime occurs on public transportation systems and in crowded tourist areas.

Solution: Use an anti-theft bag with an interior wire mesh barrier to prevent slashing and protect your belongings.

3. Strap Cutting: Thieves cut through the straps of a tourist's bag and run off with the entire bag. This crime is often committed by thieves riding a bicycle or moped who cut the straps and quickly ride off with the bag.

Solution: Use a bag with cut-proof straps that are embedded with stainless steel wire cables. You should try one of these bags before purchasing it, as the wire cables add weight and may cause neck and shoulder discomfort.

4. RFID (Radio-Frequency Identification) Skimming: Thieves use an RFID reader to scan through bags and wallets to access personal information from passports, driver's licenses, and credit cards.

Solution: Use wallets and bags with RFID-blocking materials to keep thieves from stealing your personal information.

5. Pickpocketing: Pickpockets often work in pairs, where one attempts to distract you, and the other reaches into your pocket or bag to steal valuables.

Solution: Use anti-theft bags with zipper clip locks. These locks may be purchased separately if your bags do not have them. Keep your wallet in a buttoned or zipped pocket, and store your extra cash in a money belt.

6. Credit card precautions:

a. Do not leave your credit cards carelessly lying around unattended.

b. Check for skimming devices and hidden cameras on ATM and gas pump readers before inserting your card. If the reader moves or feels loose, it may indicate the presence of a skimmer.

c. Use credit cards embedded with a microchip. The microchip encrypts your personal information and protects it from criminals. Credit cards without a microchip (aka magstripe cards) have a low level of encryption and are easily duplicated.

d. Inform your bank or credit card issuer of your travel plans before you leave home.

e. Set up your credit card and bank accounts to receive email or text notifications to alert you to unauthorized transactions.