Sneaky Tricks to Scare the Looters

Looters are a serious problem that accompanies any disaster. If you don't believe me, just look at Hurricane Katrina; the city was underwater, but the looters were out, seeing what they could steal.

Of course, it doesn't take a disaster to get looters going; there are plenty around on a day-to-day basis. It's just that they seem to multiply during the aftermath of a disaster.

Unfortunately, the police can't stop them.

I'm not blaming the police for that; there are only so many police officers on the streets.

There's no way that they can be everywhere at the same time, stopping those looters from doing their thing.

No, if they're going to get stopped, it's going to have to be because you and I do it, not because the police stop them.

There are three important things to keep in mind about the criminal mind. These three attributes pretty much define why they do what they do:

- They're lazy — "Why work, when you can steal?"
- They're bullies — They want to threaten and scare others so that they can steal.
- They're chicken — No criminal wants to get into a fight; they might get hurt.

What to Do

With that in mind, there are a number of things that we can do to scare off looters, before they can accomplish their goals. Always remember, your goal is to get rid of them, not

necessarily to kill them or even to arrest them. You want them to leave you alone and leave your goods with you.

- **Dogs** — This one is obvious. Everyone knows that a barking dog spells danger. When you hear a dog barking, you never know if it's a big mean dog or just a little one. Considering how devastating an attack from a dog can be, most criminals will avoid any house that has dogs, especially noisy ones.

- **Signs** — Putting out stakes and tape to mark out a mine field can be almost as effective as having a mine field. You can use that same concept by putting out signs that spell danger to any looters. "Beware of Dog" signs and the myriad styles of signs which say that you shoot first and ask questions later carry a lot of impact. Most criminals will avoid any place where it looks like they're going to have to fight.

- **Camouflage** — It won't scare the looters, but you can do a lot with camouflage, making your home look like there's nothing there worth stealing. In the aftermath of most disasters there is usually a lot of debris lying around. Collect some and pile it against your house, making your home look like just one more wrecked home in the neighborhood.

- **Fire** — Do you remember seeing flame throwers in the old World War II movies? Flame throwers are terror weapons, designed to scare whatever out of any enemies. Most people can deal with the idea of getting shot much better than the idea of being burned alive. You can make a fairly good makeshift flame thrower with a can of hairspray and butane lighter. Light the hairspray on fire and charge; they'll probably run. Another way that you can use fire as a terror weapon is to buy a flare gun. These are made of plastic and shoot the flare out of a 12 gauge shotgun shell. Paint the gun black to

cover up the orange plastic and make it look like a real gun. When you shoot it at the looters, it will look like you're shooting fireballs at them.

- **Ambush** – If it comes down to a fight, you need to stack the deck in your favor. The easiest way to do that is with an ambush. Determine which way is the most likely direction of attack and plan your defenses so that you can concentrate your firepower along that route. If you have to, put obstacles in the way, to cause them to go along your planned route, rather than outflanking you. When they're in the "kill box" let loose with all the firepower you have.

- **Use Extra Shooters** – Maybe you're the only real shooter in your family. But do your family members know how to shoot? If they do, then hand them guns and tell them to shoot too. Even if they don't hit the bad guys, there will be more lead flying around, making it seem like they are in greater danger. Just make sure that they can shoot well enough to avoid hitting your neighbors.

- **Simulators** – The Army has simulators that they use as traps, mostly to let them know that an enemy is approaching. These make the sound of real artillery shells, explosions and machine gun firing, causing fear in the attacker. While you can't get those simulators, you can probably get your hands on a few strings of firecrackers. In the heat of the moment, they probably won't be able to tell if they are firecrackers or if you're shooting at them with a machine gun.

Remember, your goal is to scare them, so that they will run away. In order to do that the most effectively, you want to hit them with everything you've got, all at once. In other words, while your ambush is going on, get the dogs barking and set off your simulators. Throw some fire their way as well.

The more confusion you can add to the mix, the more terror

it's going to create in their hearts. That will get them to leave, much more effectively than anything else you can do.

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