

- **Deterring Thieves**

Criminals know about forensic property marking and fear its ability to forensically link them with the scene of a crime. By marking your valuables and advertising this fact, you are sending out a clear warning to any potential thieves or burglars operating in your neighbourhood and deterring them from targeting your property.

- **What Products Are Available?**

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) recommends forensic marking products produced by the following companies:

- **Smartwater Technology Limited**
- **RedWeb Security**
- **Selectamark Security Systems**

Links to these companies can be found on the ACPO Secured By Design website (www.securedbydesign.com).

■ Further Information

To find out more about security marking products, please contact your local Neighbourhood Watch group - visit www.mynhw.co.uk for details.

For further crime prevention or property marking advice, visit the Advice Centre on the force website or call our non-emergency number below.

www.westmercia.police.uk
0300 333 3000



policing west mercia



PROTECTING YOUR POSSESSIONS

Advice on Property Marking

West Mercia is a safe place to live. Burglaries are relatively rare - less than one per cent of homes are burgled each year - and when they do occur, catching the people responsible is a priority for West Mercia Police.

Every home owner can reduce their risk of being burgled even further by ensuring their property and boundaries are secure and make life more difficult for burglars by security marking their possessions.

■ Security Marking

Security marking valuable items discourages burglars from stealing them because it makes it more difficult for them to sell them on. It also helps the police return your valuables to you if they are stolen but subsequently found.

You should mark your property with your postcode and the number / name of your house. This can be done in a number of ways:

- **Permanent marking** – using an engraving tool and a stencil.
- **Invisible marking** – use an ultraviolet (UV) pen to write your details. The ink when dried is almost invisible to the human eye but shows up under special light. UV pen markings tend to fade over time so it's best to re-apply every six months.
- **Forensic marking** – uses DNA technology to mark property with a special code which is unique to the owner.
- **Photographs** – some items such as jewellery and antiques are not suitable for marking. In these cases, it is a good idea to take photos of such items and keep them in a safe place with a record of any serial numbers or markings and a description.



To deter burglars you can obtain window stickers from the police or your local Neighbourhood Watch scheme to advertise that your possessions are security marked.



■ Forensic Property Marking

It is widely recognised that the most effective security marking methods are forensic marking systems which utilise the latest scientific developments.

• How Do They Work?

Forensic marking systems use a clear liquid that is simply dabbed onto possessions - everything from a widescreen TV to a wedding ring. It is almost invisible to the naked eye and is virtually impossible to remove. The liquid glows under ultraviolet light, making it easy for police to detect.

Each bottle contains a unique chemical code which is registered to you - conclusively proving ownership. This means that anybody found in possession of stolen items that are marked with such solutions can be linked directly to a crime scene.