

Said LaToure: "Many credit card scams involve people posing as telephone solicitors. If you initiate a call to a merchant, there is generally no problem. But if you aren't sure if a caller is legitimate, you may wish to take a name and phone number and call back to verify the company." After your purchases have been made, Pinkerton's suggests placing individual packages in a large shopping bag with strong handles.

Some final suggestions:

• When purchasing expensive items sight.

such as television sets and stereo systems. shoppers should use prudence in re home addresses or arranging delivery times. Burglars who know where such items are delivered and the times that a home may be vacant simplifies their thefts considerably.

 Do not leave purchased items con-spicuously displayed in a parked vehicle. Lock purchases in your trunk. If you drive a station wagon or hatchback, have some kind of covering to shield the gifts from





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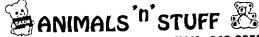
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