

Friday on mind for burglars

WES HOSKING

MAKE sure you lock up the house when you leave today: this afternoon is prime time for home burglaries.

And jewellery is the house-breaker's favourite loot.

Crime Statistics Agency figures show more than half of 30,000 home burglaries in Victoria in the year to March occurred in business hours.

The favourite time window (for 2074 burglaries) was from noon to 6pm on Friday.

Friday was also burglars' favourite day to strike, accounting for 18.1 per cent of all offences, ahead of Thursday (14.6 per cent).

And burglars, like many citizens, usually take Sundays off — it was the least popular day to break and enter.

The average worth of stolen property was \$4600. Jewellery accounted for a quarter of all items stolen, ahead of electrical appliances and tools. A total of 165 cars were stolen.

Acting Deputy Commissioner Jack Blayney said home burglaries were decreasing but were linked to car thefts and credit-card frauds.

The total number of criminal offences in Victoria in the year to March rose 1.3 per cent to 458,027, but the crime rate per 100,000 people fell 0.6 per cent — the first such decline since 2011.

Family violence spiked by 8.2 per cent: the 69,442 incidents reported are almost double figures from four years ago.

Mr Blayney said it could take up to three years to bring family violence under control.

The child sex abuse royal commission contributed to an 8.9 per cent increase in reports of sexual offences.

The ice scourge drove drug offences up 12.9 per cent.