

Going Away?

-Protecting Your Home Safety While Traveling-

It's a fact that almost all types of personal and household crime are highest in the warm months when people spend more time away from home on vacations or are involved in outdoor activities- ties. Avoid becoming part of this statistic by following these suggestions to protect your home, property, and family while you're relaxing and having fun!

BEFORE YOU LEAVE use this checklist to secure your home.

- Make sure your home looks lived in, not empty: stop mail and cancel all deliveries or ask a friend to make daily collections. Hide empty garbage cans. Leave shades and blinds in normal positions. Put an automatic timer on several lights and the radio. Have a neighbor keep your property maintained.
- Leave a key with a trusted neighbor.
- Store valuables in a safe deposit box.
- Tell a neighbor you trust your departure and return dates. Supply an itinerary with phone numbers where you can be reached in an emergency.
- Ask police if they have a "vacation home check" program.
- Lock all Windows and doors. Double check basement and garage doors before you leave.

AND AWAAAY WE GO. . . .

- Carry a minimum amount of cash. Use traveler's checks and credit cards, but keep a record of their numbers in a separate and safe place.
- Keep careful tabs on your travel tickets -- they're as good as cash. Carry them in an inside pocket, not protruding from a jacket or bag.
- If driving, plan your route carefully, travel on main roads, and use maps. Have your car serviced and tires checked before leaving.
- Don't advertise your plans to strangers.
- Always lock your car when it's parked, even if the stop is brief. Keep valuables out of sight, preferably locked in the trunk. Don't leave wallets, checkbooks, or purses in the car.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- If you stop overnight, remove bags and other valuables from the car and take them inside.
- If your car breaks down, turn on your flashers and raise the hood or tie a white cloth to the antenna. If you must abandon your car, keep all passengers together.
- Carry a flashlight with fresh batteries, flares, a fire extinguisher, and a first aid kit.
- Avoid traveling during the night hours if you can. If you are in a foreign country, learn the words for police officer and doctor. Know location of the nearest U.S. consulate.

MOTELS AND HOTELS

- Use all auxiliary locking devices when occupying or leaving your room.
- Know who's knocking before you open the door.
- Keep extra cash and valuables locked in the hotel safe deposit box, not in the room. Always take cash, credit cards, and keys with you.
- Locate fire exits, elevators, and the nearest phone. Plan the best way to get out of the building in an emergency.
- Inventory your belongings daily.
- Be observant. Report any suspicious movements in the corridors or rooms to the management.

SIGHTSEEING

- Learn about your surroundings. Ask local residents about problem areas and avoid them.
- Select sightseeing companies and guides carefully.
- Make sure your children know the name, address, and telephone number of your hotel or motel.
- Avoid advertising you are a tourist by the way you dress.
If older children go off separately, be sure they have watches and check in with you at prearranged times.

TAKE ACTION -- TODAY

- Call your police or sheriff's department to arrange for a home security survey. Correct any problems before you go away.
- List all credit card numbers, their expiration dates, and numbers to call if lost.
- Have your car checked.
- Offer your help to neighbors when they go away!