

Vacation Safety

It's that time of the year again, when most of us are planning our vacations. The months of May through August are the most traveled months for vacation. If you are traveling, you should have a plan prior to leaving, to ensure safety of you and your passengers. Planning is essential for not only the vehicle/plane transport, but the safety and security of unattended homes.

It is recommended that you shut off utilities, such as gas and water at the main valve. Ask a neighbor and/or the police (if they have a procedure in place) to keep an eye on your home and give them a telephone number in case of an emergency. Also, it is best to stop the delivery of mail and newspapers. Only take essential money, credit cards, insurance card and identification.

It's not a good idea to post your vacation on social media. Some other suggestions are listed below:

- If you have a hidden spare key for your home, remove it.
- Make sure all windows and doors of your house are secure and locked.
- It is also a good idea to invest in a timer(s) for your light(s).
- Make a checklist of items that you will need ahead of time.
- If you are traveling on the road, make sure that your vehicle has had a thorough inspection. And drive at a comfortable speed (within posted limits). It is wise to study the driving route ahead of time (including stops) rather than while driving and include plenty of breaks and refreshments to prevent driving fatigue. Always make sure to wear your seatbelt. It's best to travel in daylight and leave plenty of time, so that you aren't rushing.
- Take a first aid kit, including flashlight and flares.

During your vacation, be sure to keep your money, wallet and/or purse close to your body. If you are flying, carry on anything of value, including medicine, jewelry, money, etc. Lots of baggage and expensive luggage make you more vulnerable to being robbed. If renting a car during your trip, make yourself familiar with the lights, mirrors, etc. It is not prudent to leave your car running and unattended.

When you arrive at your destination, make sure your car and hotel room stay locked. As soon as you check in to your room, make yourself familiar with emergency exits, stairs, fire extinguisher and the fire alarm pull station. Be sure to park your vehicle in a lighted area, where possible, and make sure that valuables in the car are out of site (covered with a blanket, etc., or placed in the trunk).

If you have to walk at night, make sure you are in well-lighted/well-travelled areas. Is is best to travel with a companion, if possible. And, don't leave money or expensive items lying open in the hotel room.

The most important thing to remember is to take safety with you everywhere and during everything you do.

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