SUMMER CRIME PREVENTION BULLETIN

Don’t let thieves spoil your summer vacation! While you’re away, your homes and vehicles may be vulnerable to burglary, theft or vandalism - take steps to protect your home and vehicle before you leave!

Tips to Protect Your Home

• Always secure your windows and doors while you are away, even if only for a few minutes but especially for long periods of time and at night. Pay particular attention to ground floor and out of sight (such as rear or side) entrance ways.
• Consider the use of security or motion lighting, especially near out of sight entrance ways. Also, consider trimming shrubbery near windows and doors which thieves may use to conceal themselves.
• If you have an alarm system, make sure it is armed and your monitoring company has updated emergency contact information. If you are allowing anyone to be inside while you are away, be sure to provide them a temporary code and notify your monitoring company who has permission in case police are inadvertently called.
• Even if you don’t have an alarm system, stickers and signs can be purchased and placed in visible locations around your property which imply you do and may deter thieves. The same goes for a “beware of dog” sign.
• Bring all valuables (such as your grill, bicycles or metal benches) inside if possible. If not, secure them with case-hardened chains and locks. Transparent, shatter-proof film can be purchased and placed on vulnerable windows.
• Remove window air-conditioning units, which can be easily removed for theft or to gain access inside, whenever possible. Also, secure any ladders and remove objects from under windows on which thieves could stand on to climb inside. Remove any items that can be opportunistically used to break windows or locks (like tools or even large rocks) from your yard and around your home.
• Don’t leave valuables, credit card, car keys or cash in open spaces when you plan to be out, take steps to move them to a secure location in case a thief does get into your home.
• Ask someone you trust to collect your papers, packages and mail or have them held at the post office while you’re away. When mail piles up not only does it become a target for theft, but it lets thieves know no one has been home for a while. Also, consider the use of automatic timed lighting devices both inside and outside of your home while you are away.
• Record the serial numbers of all of your valuable electronics and keep it in a safe place, it may help Police to trace and track them if stolen.
• Notify your local police station that you will be away so periodic checks can be made on your property. Make sure you provide emergency contact information and a list of anyone who is allowed to be on or in your property while you’re away.

Tips to Protect Your Vehicle

• Always attempt to park in well lit, well-populated areas whenever possible, especially when leaving your vehicle for long periods of time.
• Always be sure your windows are up and doors are locked when leaving your vehicle unattended, even if only for a few minutes - but especially if for long periods of time.
• Never leave valuables in plain view. If possible, place items in a secure area (like the trunk or a locked compartment) or take them with you.
• Thieves will often break into a vehicle even if it appears there may be items of value inside. Remove docking stations for your GPS or music devices from the windshield when not in use, and be sure to wipe the suction cup “ring” from the window.
• Keep your vehicle washed and clean. Vehicles that appear overly dirty and neglected, especially those that have been parked in the same place for an extended period of time, give the impression that an owner rarely checks on the vehicle and it may be an easy target for theft, vandalism or even unwarranted towing.
• Never leave spare keys for your vehicle or home inside of your vehicle. Spare keys enable thieves’ access to steal your vehicle, and access to your home as well. Consider keeping your paperwork in your wallet instead of your glove-box - these items have your home address on them.

The best thing you can do to prevent crime is be neighborly. Alert those you trust when you will be away, and ask them to keep an eye on your property and vehicle while you’re gone. Return the favor when your neighbors are away!

See something? Say Something.

For more information, contact the South Street Station Community Relations/ Crime Prevention Officer.

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