

VACATION TIPS

Preparations

- Don't advertise vacation plans beyond those who need to know.
- Have a friend pick up your mail and newspapers, or have them held.
- Set up timers on lamps in more than one room. Get timers that can operate for two or more intervals a day to simulate morning and evening routines.
- Consider putting a TV or talk-radio channel on a timer to simulate human voices and presence.
- Turn your telephone ringer off or down low (long, loud rings say "nobody's home.") Or, use call-forwarding.
- If you have an answering machine, keep the outgoing message vague: "We can't come to the phone right now; please leave a message." Never leave specifics indicating how long you'll be gone.
- Unplug most electrical appliances.
- Securely lock all windows and doors.
- Do not leave an extra key beneath the mat, over the door frame, or under a convenient rock. Any place you can think of, crooks can think of too. Leave the key with a trusted contact who will look in on your house while you are gone.

Have a Trusted Contact

Your most effective step is to arrange for trusted relatives, friends, or neighbor to house sit, or to check your home on a daily basis while you are gone. They can help with:

- Picking up mail, newspapers, unsolicited ads, etc. daily. (If that's not convenient, arrange for your newspapers and mail to be held until you return.)
- Taking care of pets.
- Parking a spare car in the driveway or in front of the house.
- Turning on lights that aren't on timers at different times of day.
- Opening and closing curtains.
- Mowing the lawn, watering the yard, raking leaves, shoveling snow.
- Make sure your contact knows how to reach you in an emergency. And make sure you have your contact's number in case you forgot something.
- If you have an alarm system, make sure your contact knows how to set or reset it. They should also know your itinerary, such as where you'll be staying and your expected date of return.

While You Are Away

- Consider using credit cards or traveler's checks instead of cash.
- Driving? Check the oil, gas, headlights, tail lights, brake lights, brake fluid, radiator water level and tire inflation before leaving home. Carry a map in your car. Learn how to change a flat tire; carry an inflated spare and appropriate tools, including a flash light.
- Pack your medication, toothbrush, first aid kit...and put out the cat.
- If you return from vacation to find your home has been broken into, don't go in--the criminals may still be inside. Go to a neighbor's house and call the police.

For more information

Call (541) 682-5137 or e-mail the Eugene Police Crime Prevention Specialist at policeprevention@ci.eugene.or.us



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