

Vacation Crime Prevention

As the summer months arrive, many of us are looking forward to a well-earned vacation. A time to relax with family and friends, visit tourist attractions or even just sit on the beach with a good book.. Whatever your vacation plans are, being the victim of crime is probably not one of them. While making your vacation plans you may want to consider adding these crime prevention strategies to your itinerary:

Secure your home when away

- Have quality locks on all doors and windows. **USE THEM!**
- Engrave all your valuables with your Driver's License number.
- Never leave a house key hidden outside of your home. A thief will find it!
- Make your house appear "lived in". Use timers for lights and radios. Have a trusted neighbor park their car in your driveway. Consider using a house sitter.
- Have a neighbor or friend pick up mail, packages and newspapers.
- Make sure that your landscaping is maintained in your absence.
- Leave trip plans and emergency phone number with a trusted neighbor or friend.
- Some local police agencies offer Vacation Watch programs where officers will check your home. Call and find out!

On the road

- Never carry large amounts of cash. Use traveler's checks or credit/debit cards.
- If you have to carry cash don't display it openly.
- Keep a record of traveler's check and credit card numbers in a safe place in case they are lost or stolen.
- Have telephone numbers to call in case your credit card or checks are lost or stolen.
- Never advertise your vacation plans, travel routes or the amount of money you're carrying to strangers.
- Have your vehicle checked out by a mechanic before making a road trip.
- If your car breaks down, raise the hood and attach a white cloth to the car antenna.
- Carry a cell phone, water, food and a first aid kit.
- If you must leave your car keep all passengers together.

Sightseeing

- Ask for directions at your hotel or motel. They will often have maps available noting the best routes to the attractions you want to see.
- Select your guides carefully.
- Ask if there are any areas in town you should avoid.

- If older children go off separately, be sure they understand the importance of keeping track of time, returning promptly at appointed hours and personal safety.
- Trust your instincts...if you feel uncomfortable with an area or a person then go to an area where you feel safe.

Hotel and Motel Security

- Determine the most direct route to and from your room, to the fire escapes, elevators and nearest phone.
- When occupying or leaving your room, use all auxiliary-locking devices on doors and windows.
- Use the door viewer to identify anyone requesting entry.
- Do not leave valuables such as jewelry, cash or credit cards unattended in your room.
- Arrange your belongings in your room so you will know if anything is missing.
- Park your vehicle in a well-lit area that is close to your room. Make sure that it is locked and that valuables are not visible.

Camping Tips

- Be aware of fire conditions. If campfires are allowed, build them only in designated areas and be extremely careful.
- Avoid camping alone in isolated areas.
- Park your vehicle so it will not be blocked by another vehicle in case of emergency.
- Familiarize yourself with local emergency locations and phone numbers in case of accidents or crime.
- Avoid leaving your camping gear out in the open unattended.
- Avoid hiking alone at night.
- Use a chain and lock to secure propane tanks, extra fuel tanks, portable generators, spare tires, bicycles, etc.
- Always lock your camp trailer when you leave your campground.
- Install a locking device on your trailer and boat tow hitches to prevent theft.
- Before taking weapons with you, be aware of the regulations. In many parks and wildlife refuges, it is against the law to carry weapons.
- Report any suspicious activities and all crimes to the proper authorities - in parks, the park rangers; on private land, the police.

Remember...Crime Prevention Needs Your Attention!