

Vacation!

The kids are out of school, the inflatable pool is warming up in the back yard, and the mosquitos are stopping by in the evening to say hello! Yes, it is finally Summer! That means it is time for the exodus to the pools and beaches. But before you hit the road for Wally World, you might take a moment to think about home and family security.

Social media is a great place to post vacation photos, but don't post them until AFTER you return home. Posting photos or comments like *"We are having a great time wrestling crocs and sampling the fried gopher here in St. Oakmite, and glad we won't be back at work for another week!"* might as well tell criminals *"Hey, we won't be home for a few more days so help yourself to our belongings."* I know, you wouldn't do that, but will your kids? If you use an "out of office" notification in your email or voicemail, you might consider not referencing vacation plans there either.

Before you hit the road, you may also consider taking all the credit cards, membership cards, i.d.'s, etc. out of your purse or wallet and take inventory. In the event your purse or wallet is lost or stolen it will be a lot easier to notify all the credit card companies and such if you know who to contact. A quick and easy way to do this is to take a photocopy of them (or a photo with your phone, IF you don't keep your phone inside your purse). Get images of both sides, since the contact info is usually on the reverse side.

Remove garage door opener remotes from vehicles parked outside or at airport lots. Most people have their home addresses somewhere in their vehicle (look in the glove compartment and see if you find your home address), and if you have a removable remote control in your car it is a simple matter for a criminal to break into the car and find your home address, then take the remote that will let them into your home.

If you have any hidden keys under a mat, behind a planter, under a rock, etc. then remove it. Most hiding spots are not as clever as we all want to believe, and a practiced criminal will find it.

Finally, do what you can to make your home look inhabited. Have a friend put out the trash, take in the newspaper (tell your kids what that is), have lights on timers, and maybe have a radio playing inside the house.

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