

agentinsight

Make Your Home Safe While You're Away

Before you load up the car, van, camper, or RV, and head for your much needed vacation, Erie Insurance encourages you to make sure everything is taken care of at home so that when you return, it's business as usual.

Most burglaries occur in July and August, and residential burglaries account for two-thirds of all burglaries. The standard thief is an opportunist who lives within 10 blocks of your home and knows your schedule.

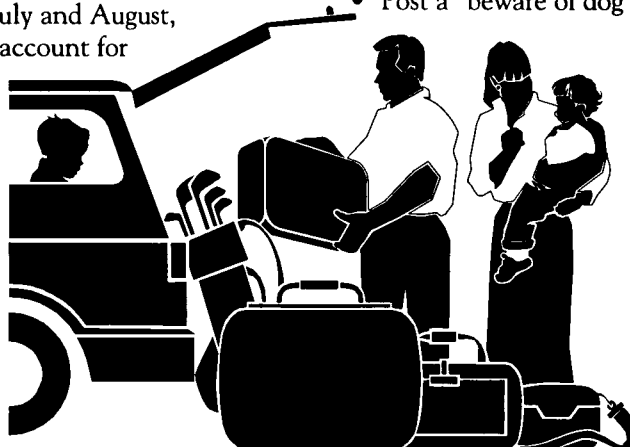
Making your home appear to have plenty of activity is the best protection against any criminal activity. Since prime vacation months are prime crime months, a little protection can go a long way. Erie Insurance Group offers some basic home protection tips:

- Find a home helper—a relative, friend or neighbor who can come and go at your home on an unpredictable schedule.
- Set up timers that will automatically activate lights, televisions and radios.
- Ask your home helper to park a car in your driveway at various hours—overnight if possible.
- Hide garbage cans in the garage. If your cans are empty while all the neighbors' cans are overflowing, it can be a signal that residents are away. Similarly, ask neighbors to place a few trash bags in front of your home for refuse collection time.
- If you have a telephone answering machine, don't alter your message to indicate that you're on vacation.
- Arrange for someone to collect your mail, newspapers and other deliveries. While some travelers believe it's best to place a hold on

regular deliveries, the interruption of normal daily activities may draw attention to the house.

- Be cautious about letting strangers or casual acquaintances know your travel plans.
- Post a "beware of dog" sign or security system decal in your window. Even if you don't have pooch protection or a security system, the appearance of one can be a burglar deterrent.
- Place small valuables in your bank safe deposit box while you're away.
- Keep valuables hidden.
- For added protection, install exterior lights that leave no dark shadows for prowlers to hide outside your home.
- For the ultimate protection, install an electronic home security system, but buyer beware. It isn't for every family. Some people aren't able to get into the habit of using it, and everyone in the family has to be able to do that.

This information is provided as a service of Erie Insurance Group and your local ERIE Agent:



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