

## JULY SAFETY TIPS NEWSLETTER

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Here's a list of safety tips that can help keep ourselves and belongings from being the target of criminal activity.

### WHEN YOU'RE AWAY FROM HOME:

- Don't post the dates you will be away on social media.
- If you have them, set outdoor/indoor timers to go on and off at specific times. Lights on outside provides more visibility of someone attempting to commit a crime. Lights on inside signifies that someone's home.
- When you're not at home, no matter how long, let a trusted friend or family member pick up your mail, newspapers (if you haven't stopped postal or newspaper delivery).
- If your vehicle sits in the driveway while you're gone, it would be a good idea to have it moved around to give the impression someone IS home.
- If you have a pet being cared for by someone you trust, this also provides the opportunity to ensure that everything else in the home is secure on a regular basis. Hopefully the pet sitter doesn't have a magnetic sign on their vehicle, as this definitely advertises that the house is vacant.
- If you want to have the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Office** check your home while you're away, just call 727-582-6177 to make arrangements for this service.

### WHILE YOU'RE HOME:

- Close your drapes and blinds at night to prevent being a target. Leaving them open is an invitation to thievery.
- Also, don't leave your windows open and doors unlocked even if you're just visiting your next door neighbor.
- Install motion sensor lighting. Potential thieves will turn and run rather than pursue their intent to burglarize your home.
- Be vigilant in what you drag to the curb. If you purchased an expensive item, such as a TV, computer, etc., be sure to deconstruct the box and place it so it can't be easily seen before leaving it for the garbage to pick up.

### SECURING YOUR VEHICLE:

- Even if you are conscientious about locking your vehicle, don't take it for granted it won't be broken into – especially if there's something valuable and visible for the taking; i.e. laptop, cell phone, packages, firearm, garage door opener, to name a few. And just because you covered items of value, doesn't mean it will deter a break in; the perpetrator may want to know what's underneath. These actions will not only save you the cost of repairing damage to your vehicle, but also the loss of your valuable item(s); some of which may not be replaceable.

### GARAGE DOOR OPENERS:

- Speaking of garage door openers, you actually shouldn't leave them in your vehicle if it's normally parked outside. If you want to use your opener as a way to enter your home; then develop the habit of bringing it inside, just as you do when gathering your keys and wallet/purse, when you exit the vehicle. This practice will certainly deter the opportunity for a break in.
- Remember to remove your garage door opener from your vehicle if you are having it towed, serviced at the garage, or taking advantage of a valet service and only provide the ignition key. If you aren't in a position to remove it from your vehicle, then be sure to place it in the glove compartment and lock it and your trunk (if you have one), to keep other valuables from being snatched.

### SECURING PERSONAL INFORMATION:

- Use a paper shredder before tossing personal papers that contain your name, address, credit card/bank account/phone numbers, passwords, etc. You could become a new target of those who are always looking to gain the most without much effort.

**AND MOST OF ALL**, remember help is just a phone call away. If you see or hear something, say something, no matter if it's a nuisance call or a non-criminal problem (call 727-582-6200). For a crime in progress, or medical emergency (dial **911**). The **Pinellas County Sheriff's Office** is here to serve and protect us in our time of need.