

March 2023

A Safer Naperville --- Residential Burglary Prevention

As the weather starts to turn warmer and Spring Break approaches, the Naperville Police Department would like to remind you to protect your home before heading out of town. Making home protection part of your pre-vacation check list could save you a lot of grief when you return home.

Below are some proactive things you can do to deter burglars, who are often looking for crimes of opportunity while unsuspecting homeowners are out of town. Remember: It will take you far less effort to secure your home than it will to replace all the property that could be stolen.

Inside the Home

- Set timers on interior lights or a radio. Don't allow your home to appear as if no one is living there. If you are going to be gone for some time, invest in a timer with random settings so thieves can't detect a pattern or ask a trusted person to change the timer settings and/or locations in the home.
- Secure valuables. If you don't already have your jewelry or other valuables in a safe or safety deposit box, now might be the time to do so. Doing this also ensures that you don't leave anything valuable in plain sight, visible to a burglar through a window.
- Check that all windows and doors, including garage doors, are closed and locked. It might seem obvious but double-check just to be sure. You could also turn off your garage door opener to prevent someone from using the exterior keypad. If your child has ever shared the garage code with a friend, this tip will also prevent their friends from entering the home to use it as a party place while you're enjoying your time away.
- If you have an alarm system, advise your alarm company that you will be away for an extended period and make sure all emergency contact information is up to date. Make sure the alarm is set properly when you leave and that a trusted person knows the code in case they need to check your home.

Outside the Home

- Arrange for lawn care. Have your landscaping tended to by a friendly neighbor or local service. Have a plan for all seasons: cutting grass in the spring and summer, raking leaves in the fall, and clearing driveways and walkways of snow after every winter storm.
- Create open spaces in your landscaping and keep bushes trimmed so burglars have fewer places to hide. If you're landscaping, plant thorny bushes such as roses in vulnerable areas.
- Stop mail and newspaper deliveries or have them regularly picked up by a neighbor. You don't want mounting newspapers or packages on your doorstep to easily clue a burglar in to your absence.
- Plan some exterior lighting. Set these lights on timers or motions sensors to deter burglars. Place them high to prevent someone from unscrewing the bulb.
- Don't leave spare keys outdoors. Remember, burglars know the most popular hiding places, like beneath mats and in potted plants.
- Don't leave tools or ladders in your yard. Burglars may use them to gain access into your home.

- If you'll be away from home on garbage day, ask a trusted neighbor to put some garbage in your cans, bring them to the street and then take them back in.

Other Items of Interest

- Be wary about posting your vacation plans and updates on social media. Even though you trust your friends, you never know who might learn that you're not home. Post pictures of your adventures after you return home.
- If you have children, discuss home security with them, such as not giving friends access to the home, its contents or family schedules.
- Have someone keep an extra eye on your home. If you have a friend, family member, or neighbor that you can trust, ask them to drop in every few days to ensure that everything is in order and undisturbed.