

Park Place

Block Captain Neighborhood Watch Program

Vacation & 'Snowbird' Security Checklist

Thieves look for what police term “**targets of opportunity.**” There are many things you can do to avoid becoming a victim, especially if you are going to be away from your home for an extended period.

1. Notify your Block Captain providing the dates you'll be away. Also, the City of Sebastian Police Department has a program to check on your house periodically. A form Sebastian Police Volunteers Housewatch Form must be completed by the homeowner about a week before your trip and is available from the police department, on our PPHA web site or your Block Captain. There are some restrictions.
2. Make sure exterior areas around your home do not give your absence away. Arrange to have newspaper and all deliveries either stopped or picked up by a neighbor on a daily basis.
3. Double check the outside areas which are often overlooked that could be a hiding place for someone trying to break in—trim back offending landscaping or bushes.
4. Leave a car in the driveway—maybe even ask your neighbor to park in your driveway. Have outside and inside lights turned off and on with a home timer. Arrange to have routine maintenance including weed removal and the bushes trimmed while you are away.
5. Have several timers attached to lights in various locations throughout the house. One timer can be programmed to turn one light on and off several times during the evening. Several timers performing the same function can give a “lived in” look to a home.
6. This same practice with home timers can be utilized with TVs and radios. It gives an added sound element to the “lived in” look. Remember to only have them on when you normally would be awake.
7. Ask your neighbors and to check your home regularly, and leave a number with them where you can be reached. Also ask neighbors to use your garbage cans. Spotters for burglars sometimes work for trash collectors. Ask neighbors to also pick up handbills or circulars on your porch or door knob.
8. While it is advisable to notify police and your Block Captain of your planned absence, don't tell everyone about your plans. Don't leave notes on the door for neighbors or couriers.
9. If, upon returning from your trip, you spot evidence of a break-in, do not enter the house, the burglar may still be inside. **Call 911 at once!**
10. Take photos of personal items and make a list by serial number, and date purchased. Keep the list in a safe place (bank safe deposit box) and not in your home. In addition, mark valuables with an engraver.
11. Doors and windows should be equipped with dead bolt locks.

PPBC 10/14/2014 Vacation/ Snowbird security checklist