

Summer Safety

Summer is a fun time of the year. The kids are off school, the family is looking forward to more fun family activities, including heading off on a trip. We can all remember family trips driving to Disneyland, the Grand Canyon, hiking in the Smokey Mountains or taking a portion of the Appalachian Trail. Many families have great memories of fun holiday trips. Unfortunately, there are those among us who look forward to finding houses to burglarize.



When planning your holiday, keep your plans away from the internet and social media. Don't broadcast to the world you are going on your trip (and thereby leaving the house available for burglary). Don't upload your pictures to social media during your absence. Make certain the location is not being stamped and transmitted in your photos.

Make your home a hard target. This is essential not only while on holiday, but all 52 weeks of the year. Burglaries are up around the country – make your house appear to be more difficult. A team of criminals can access and burglarize your entire house in under five minutes. It is beneficial to have an exterior sign announcing your home is protected. An alarm sign, a dog sign, a large dog water bowl, alarm contacts, motion sensors, cameras, lights should all be considered in your home protection plan. Keep trees and shrubs trimmed and not blocking first floor windows. Large uncut shrubs allow entry by burglars without being seen by the neighbors and police. Keep all windows and doors visible from the street.



While packing for your trip, include some safety equipment for your temporary lodging. Sabre has a small door alarm for inward opening doors looks like a simple door wedge, but sounds a 120dB alarm if door is opened (\$10). Master Lock has an easily transportable security bar for hinged and sliding doors (\$15). These are both inexpensive ways to protect you not only while away on holiday, but also for when you are at home, or your child is away at college.



Light timers give the impression of activity in a dark home. Keep a few staged around the house all year long, not just while away on holiday. An alarm system can be configured in a myriad of ways to your personal specifications. Door camera systems (video doorbells) are available that allow you to answer the doorbell remotely through your smart phone. The person at the door has no idea if you are home, at work, or even out of state. These items are also handy for allowing access to the house to authorized people on your behalf. Never leave a key hidden – the burglars know where to look!



Don't forget about your personal health safety! Anybody can be at risk for heat-related illness. Drink plenty of water, not carbonated or caffeine filled drinks. Take frequent breaks while in the heat and be aware of your own body temperature. Heat exhaustion and stroke can easily manifest themselves.

Not including boating incidents, on average about nine people die from drowning every day. The younger the child, the greater the risk. Pool life guards are not babysitters, the parents need to be always watchful.



Cell phone use is now estimated to be involved in nearly 1/3 of all motor vehicle crashes. This number continues to rise and makes our insurance rates rise also. Want to know why our insurance rates have been rising so much in the past few years, look around you while on the road. How many people are texting and driving – technically it's called distracted driving, more dangerous than driving while intoxicated. Give your undivided attention to the road. Avoid distracted driving such as cell phone use (talking, texting, emailing, navigating, setting appointments), applying make-up, shaving, eating, changing clothes, watching movies – it's amazing what you see transpiring behind the windshield of other vehicles.

Summer is the time for family outings, barbeques, pool parties, parades, and fireworks displays. Unfortunately many of these events end with a visit to the emergency room. Always know the location of your nearest emergency room and urgent care, even while away on holiday! This can save valuable response time when someone becomes a victim! Recently the news reported on a mechanic who lost three fingers from his master hand while lighting fireworks for his kids. Now he is unable to work and support his family. There is a reason fireworks are illegal in most jurisdictions. Leave it to the professionals – sit back and watch the show safely. ***You are in charge of your own safety!***

Advantage has several classes for personal safety for individuals, for students, for church groups, for senior citizens and others. Check www.AdvantageFET.com for more details and schedule a class!

