Summer is here - Safe Home while you Travel

Summer is here - Safe Home while you Travel (https://www.cstcsafety.com/blog/summer-is-here-safe-home-while-you-travel)

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CSTC wishes you and your family the happiest of holidays over the summer. This is a great time of the year to spend with family, and for a lot of us, requires traveling over the summer period. We wanted to give you a few tips on making your home safer while you enjoy time away with family and friends.

1 - Ensure the home you are leaving is in safe hands.

A house sitter might be too much in your holiday planning, but having a family friend or their high school student can be a great option here. A lot of us have critters who will not be making the trip, so a house sitter can help with your family members / pets, while you are away. Not all house sitters stay overnight, it is very common to have your sitter check on your house daily, turn on and off lights (or use timers), feed your animals, bring your packages inside and check your mail. If your sitter is of driving age, they could move your vehicles, in addition to other items like trash cans.

This is a great holiday job for high schoolers, that won't break your holiday budget.

2 - Use an alternative mail provider for mail and packages over the holiday period.

Mailboxes & Packages left on door steps are a common target, and left for too long, might be a signal you are away during the holidays.

You can have the Post office hold your mail while you are away, but more and more people are moving to 3rd party mail providers, like a UPS store. They are great because all of your mail is collected, safely, and they will even text message you when you get a package. You will never have to worry about packages sitting on your door.

Note: This is great when you move houses, you do not have to update your address with all your contacts, since your UPS store address doesn't change.

There are 3rd party mail services that will even open your mail for you, scan and email your documents, and forward only the physical mail you require. This is perfect for those long holidays where you need access to your mail, and do not want to rely on someone else to open your mail for you.

3 - Secure your home

A lot of people are using ADT, Vivint Security and many others to secure their homes, which are great options, but more and more people are going to DIY home security with tools like Ring. Ring is a very popular system (one of many), with Door Bells, Floodlights, and full alarm systems (which even have monitoring services if you desire). With motion alerts, and being able to answer your door from anywhere with cell service, you can take control of your home security. Each alert is recorded, so you can review later, and even share if needed.

There are many options for home security, and with the power of your cellphone, you can do much more with a smart home, even unlocking and locking the door for your house sitter without having to provide them a key.

4 - Neighborhood watch

With technology, we have more tools at our disposal, one of them being an active neighborhood watch. Built into the Ring apps is their Neighborhood feed tools, where you can share your cameras and footage with neighbors, and share information.

NextDoor is a common community app, where you can invite neighbors, share information, look out for each other, and watch each other's backs.

Facebook groups are forming for a lot of communities, and you see the same type of community health, share and protection threads at work.

All of these tools are available, and can help you feel safer knowing your neighborhood is in good hands while you are away.

5 - Sharing too much information is an invitation for trouble.

With all the pros of technology, are a lot of cons. Not everyone uses social media and their neighborhood watch tools for the right reasons. Ensure you only share what is required while you are away, because posting you are away on any social media outlet might be an invitation to those on the prowl for potential targets. Leaving the dates vague leaves uncertainty, and mentioning house sitter, security systems, and other items will curve the appeal.

We hope some of these tips make leaving your home for the holidays a little safer and a little less stressful.

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