

Commissioner Sue Gunzburger

Broward County Commission, District 6

The summer is here and it's time to take that long awaited vacation! Or maybe you're headed to your summer home away from home? Before you leave, make sure that your home and valuables are safe and secure.

There's a lot more to securing your home than just making sure the doors are locked. Vacation safety begins with planning. So, before you leave, go through the checklist below. The key is to make your home look like you never left!

- Stop all deliveries. An accumulation of newspapers and mail will attract the attention of would-be burglars to your absence.
- Arrange to have lights turned on in the evening either by a neighbor or an automatic timer; you can purchase one at most any hardware store. The same lights left on night after night is a sign that no one's home to turn them off!
- Tell the police that you will be gone so they can periodically check your house.
- Leave a radio on or attach it to the automatic timer.
- Keep shades or blinds in their normal positions, but make sure that it's not too easy to peer into your windows.
- If needed, arrange to have the grass mowed while you're gone.
- Make sure that all locks on doors and windows are in good working order and secured.
- Make sure that electrical appliances are unplugged and that water faucets are tightly turned off.
- Consider taking valuables to a bank safety deposit box.
- Test your smoke and burglar alarms to be sure they are working.
- Activate your home alarm if you have one.
- Leave your vacation address and telephone number with someone you trust, so you can be reached in case of an emergency.

If you take these simple steps chances are you won't come home to any surprises. Remember, you may be taking a holiday—but thieves don't!

Have a great safe summer!