

SAFETY SENSE

Tips On Preparing Your Home To Be Left Alone

(NAPSA)—Whether you're leaving your home for a few weeks or for a short weekend getaway, you don't want to leave the door open for a potential break-in.

The FBI reports that a burglary occurs every 8 seconds in the United States and identity theft is the fastest-growing crime in the U.S., accounting for more than 42 percent of all complaints filed with the Federal Trade Commission. In 2006, more than 8 million U.S. residents were victims of identity theft and the average identity theft insurance claim totaled \$90,000.

Being prepared for such an occurrence is imperative. Homeowners should protect important items and documents in a locked safe or chest. Securely storing valuables is a surefire way to safely protect vital information and items from burglaries, fire and flood damage while on vacation.

What To Protect

Among the items that should be protected are:

- Birth certificates
- Passports
- Financial bank statements
- Medical records (health, dental, etc.)
- Vehicle title, registration and certificate of sale
- Marriage certificate
- New home deed
- Itemized home inventory listing.

When theft deterrence is the main consideration, consumers may choose from security safes featuring solid steel construc-



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tion, concealed hinges and hardened steel plate to protect cash and valuable assets. The new Sentry Safe Security Safe X Series, for example, feature either an electronic lock with override key or a six-lever key lock, carpeted floor, two live-locking bolts and bolt-down kit; some even have a removable shelf for added convenience and storage for laptops, complete with access for power cords.

Natural Disasters

While on vacation and away from home, it is also crucial for consumers to protect their house or apartment from natural disasters that may strike while they are away. Tornadoes can rip through a town with little to no warning. Floods and flash floods happen in all 50 states, yet 53 percent of residents don't feel vulnerable to such natural disasters.

To learn more about home security, visit www.sentrysafe.com.