



TO: ALL STUDENTS LIVING IN OFF CAMPUS RESIDENCES

FROM: RISK MANAGEMENT & SAFETY

SUBJECT: SECURING YOUR OFF CAMPUS RESIDENCE DURING THE HOLIDAY BREAK

DATE: 12/15/08

The holidays are a time when thefts increase due to a less populated campus and town. Thieves target computers, laptops, cameras and other electronic equipment in particular. Increasing awareness of crime prevention techniques may decrease the opportunity for a person to commit a criminal offense.

Here are a few crime prevention tips to help you make your home and yourself safer while you are away during the holidays:

- *Lock all doors and windows* and close blinds and curtains when you leave.
- Consider purchasing at least one timer and set it to turn lights in your residence on during the evening. Multiple timers set to turn on an off at staggered intervals are even better. Also, consider leaving a radio on, or placing a radio on a timer. Both of these actions might cause a potential thief to believe someone is home.
- Try to have someone stay at your residence over the holidays, or at least provide them with a key, and ask them to check it every few days. Have someone stop by daily to take in your mail, newspaper, advertising circulars, garbage cans, etc.
- If you know your neighbors, ask them to keep an eye on things and report suspicious activities.
- Turn your phone ringer down or off. Do not change your answering machine message, especially to indicate that you are out of town.
- Contact the post office to put mail on hold when out of town. Contact the newspaper to have deliveries placed on hold.
- Take your purse, wallet, keys, cell phone, jewelry and other valuable items with you. Consider locking other items you leave behind in closet, drawer or locker. Do not leave cash or unused checks behind. Also, avoid leaving documents that may contain personal information, especially credit card and bank statements.
- *Avoid leaving expensive personal items.* This includes computers, text books, library books, calculators, valuable art, stereos, CD players, iPods, video game systems, cell phones or any other items that might draw attention.

- Take your desktop or laptop computer home with you. If you are unable to do this, make sure your computer is password protected and locked down if possible. Make sure that the keys to any locked down computers are safely stored.
- Contact your landlord now for repairs to any doors or windows that do not lock properly. Also, report dripping or running faucets or a continuously running toilet.
- Keep a list of serial numbers and descriptions of your valuables and equipment with you. If possible, take a picture of these items as well.
- Consider storing your bicycle indoors or taking it with you when you leave campus.
- Unplug all appliances and other items such as hair dryers, curling irons, lamps, etc. before you leave.
- Take out all garbage and remove all food, especially perishables, to avoid attracting bugs or other pests.
- If you plan on leaving your car in town, have someone move it around every couple of days to make it appear someone's home. Avoid leaving items in the passenger area that might draw attention to your car. *Always lock your vehicle and roll up your windows!*
- *Before you leave, discuss and coordinate your plans with your roommate in order to make sure your residence is secured.* Be sure you know when your roommate is leaving for and returning from the break.
- Always report suspicious activities, threatening incidents, or unusual behavior, even if nothing has actually occurred.

In all emergency situations call the [City of Auburn Police Department](#) at 911. For all non-emergency issues, or to report a crime, call 501-3100.

If you have any questions about this document please contact Chris O'Gwynn in [Risk Management & Safety](#) at extension 4533.

Helpful Links:

[Auburn University Campus Safety Guide](#)

[Auburn University Public Safety](#)

[City of Auburn Public Safety](#)

[Crime Reporting and Prevention](#)

[Important Phone Numbers](#)