



Community Crime Prevention Newsletter

Plymouth, MN

Volume 2008 Number 1

Vacation Safety

Vacations are supposed to be fun and relaxing, but no vacation spot is 100% free of criminal activity. Being prepared is the best way to make sure you stay safe when travelling. However, vacation safety needs to start before you even leave home! After all, what can ruin a fun, safe vacation faster than coming home and finding your home has been burglarized? By taking a few simple steps, you can reduce the chance of becoming a victim while on vacation.

Before you leave:

- ✦ **Lock doors and windows.** Double check that all doors and windows are locked prior to leaving. Check that burglar alarms are set properly and that anyone using the alarm system knows how to use it.
- ✦ **Make your home look “lived in.”** Keep shades in a normal position. Use photoelectric sensors for exterior lights. Put lights, a television, and a radio on timers. Have a trusted neighbor keep up with yard work, snow removal, put out garbage on regular days, and pick up mail and newspapers.
- ✦ **Leave your contact numbers.** Make sure you can be contacted in case of emergency!
- ✦ **Make a record of financial documents.** Make a copy of credit cards, traveler’s checks, passports, etc. along with contact numbers in case your wallet gets lost or stolen while traveling.
- ✦ **Have your vehicle serviced.** Make sure your vehicle is in good shape before heading out on the road!

As you travel:

- ✦ **Don’t let your gas tank get below 1/4.** Travel on main roads when possible and don’t let the gas tank get too empty.
- ✦ **Stay with your car.** If your car does break down, stay with your car and ask passersby to call for help.
- ✦ **Don’t pick up hitch hikers.** If you see someone stranded, call for help, but don’t stop.
- ✦ **Keep valuables out of sight.** Don’t leave wallets and purses in the car when stopped (rest areas, tourist stops, parks, hotels, etc.) Don’t carry large amounts of cash. Lock your car. Place valuables (ipods, navigation units, etc.) in the trunk when away from the car. Don’t leave valuables (including passports, jewelry, and cash) in the hotel room; use the safe.
- ✦ **Know how to get out in a fire.** Always make a fire escape plan when you get to your hotel.

Sight seeing:

- ✦ **Ask for directions at the hotel.** Check to see if there are places in town that should be avoided. Try not to look like a “tourist.”
- ✦ **Learn international numbers for help.** 9-1-1 is not used in all countries. Know how to call for help!
- ✦ **Be aware of scams.** Most scams (see side box) occur in bigger cities, but they can happen anywhere. Remember, if something looks too good to be true, it probably is!

Common Travel Scams

“I ran out of gas”- Someone tells you they ran out of gas and need to get home. They ask for money and promise to repay you. **Solution:** Don’t give anyone money.

Fake Limo Service – You are approached by a “limo driver” who just got off work and could use some extra money. **Solution:** Use only licensed drivers / cabs.

Short Changing – You pay the correct cab fare, but the driver says you paid the wrong amount, insisting you make up for the difference. **Solution:** Count your money out loud when paying your fare.

Curfew Ordinance

Under 12:	Weekdays: Home by 9:00 PM	Weekends: Home by 10:00 PM
12-14:	Weekdays: Home by 10:00 PM	Weekends: Home by 11:00 PM
15-17:	Weekdays: Home by 11:00 PM	Weekends: Home by midnight

Crime Free Multi-Housing Corner:

Domestic Abuse Victims' Rights

In July 2007, Minnesota State Statute 504B.206 gave victims of domestic abuse the right to terminate a lease. To terminate a lease, the victim must provide a copy of the Order for Protection or No Contact Order and written notice to the landlord stating:

- ✓ The tenant fears imminent domestic abuse from the person named in the order
- ✓ The tenant needs to terminate the tenancy
- ✓ The specific date the tenancy will end

The tenant is responsible for that month's rent plus an additional amount equal to one month's rent. The law applies only to the victim and their children and does not apply to other leasees. For specifics, see 504B.206.

Featured Crime Prevention Program:

Crime Tip Line: 763-509-5177

Do you have information on a crime that occurred in Plymouth? The Police Department is asking for your help! If you have information on any crime that has been committed in Plymouth, such as: suspect name(s), vehicle description(s) or license plate information, or information about on-going criminal activity (such as drug-activity, prostitution, etc.) please call **763-509-5177** and let us know!

When calling the crime line, please give as much information about the crime that is known and what the new information is. Information can be left anonymously or you can leave a call-back number if you wish to be contacted.

Please remember: *The crime line is for additional information only! If a crime is in progress or you need to make an initial report, call 9-1-1.*

TRAFFIC TIP

Obey the speed limit!

The posted speed limit is the maximum you can drive.

Don't forget: in hazardous conditions, even the speed limit may be too fast.

Drive safely!

Especially for Business

Who do we call?

Imagine: It is 2:00 am and there is an emergency at your business: a burglary or a fire. Who do the police contact? The Plymouth Police Department would like to remind businesses to keep their "on-call" lists up-to-date! The dispatch center keeps a list of contact phone numbers for use in an after-hours emergency. It is very important that the list is kept current. To update the emergency contact information for your business, call 763-509-5147. Thank you!

Fraud Stop: Funeral Scams

A funeral is something we don't want to think about. But a funeral can easily be one of the most expensive purchases families make, easily costing over \$10,000. Grieving families want to honor their loved ones, but they are often unprepared for the decisions involved in planning a funeral. Although most funeral directors are caring professionals, some may try to take advantage of grieving families by trying to sell high ticket items.

- **First Impression Scam:** Funeral homes may show their most expensive caskets first and put cheaper caskets, painted in "less desirable" colors, in back rooms or basements or don't carry less expensive caskets.
- **Funeral Package Scam:** Funeral homes may offer packages which reduce the casket price, but greatly inflates other expenses or add services not wanted by the family.
- **Casket Gasket Scam:** Protective caskets are sold for hundreds of dollars more than regular caskets (promising to preserve remains indefinitely), even though the gaskets themselves usually cost less than \$20.

To avoid these pitfalls, the FTC enforces **The Funeral Rule**. This rule requires customers be shown a list of all caskets with descriptions and prices *prior to* showing models, requires funeral homes to use a casket you choose even if bought elsewhere, and forbids "indefinite preservation" claims. The FTC also offers guidelines for families planning a funeral. For more information, go to www.ftc.gov. (Source: www.scambusters.com)

Emergency: **9-1-1**

Non-emergency: **763-525-6210**

Crime Tip Line: **763-509-5177**

If you have any comments about this newsletter, please contact Officer Angela Haseman at the Plymouth Police Department, 3400 Plymouth Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55447, 763-509-5147 or at ahaseman@ci.plymouth.mn.us. Thank you!