

Van Zandt County Precinct Watch Program Crime Prevention Tips

Subject: Traveler Safety



We travel for several reasons – a quick escape for fun and pleasure, a business related journey, a holiday getaway, or a long vacation to visit other states or countries. Anytime you are going on a trip, it is important to take a few precautions to keep yourself safe while you are away, and your home secure when it is unoccupied.

Some individuals prefer not to make too many plans when they travel so that they may create a more free and spontaneous adventure. This certainly has its benefits, but it is imperative to plan ahead for certain situations for the sake of safety. For example, figure out what type of safe transportation methods you will have available while in an unfamiliar area. You may prefer to take your own vehicle, rent a car or rely on public transport services, but whichever mode you choose you should make every effort to ensure that your travel will be safe as possible.

It is important to make sure you know how to protect yourself while you are traveling, and to take precautions so that you do not return to a home that has been broken into and burglarized. Here are a few tips to make sure your time away is a fun and enjoyable experience.

First you must decide on the form of transportation that you will use: air, bus, train, automobile, motorcycle, bicycle, motorhome, and etc. Each has its pros and cons.

Populations in large cities utilize buses and trains to get them from home to work, take them to places for social purposes as well as for trips to go shopping or attend events. Much of the travel is done during peak hours, so there will almost certainly be a lot of people around. While this might lead to crowded situations, it likewise offers a “safety in numbers” scenario for travelers. Offenders search for those separated from others, so you are much less likely to be accosted when in a large group.

If you drive an automobile, always lock your doors. Be certain all windows are totally shut. When driving, keep all doors secured. Try to park in attended lots. If you have to leave a key with someone, leave only the ignition part if possible. In all cases lock your car. At night, park in well-lighted locations. Even if you park in a garage area, make sure you’ve locked your car. Three popular methods to protect your vehicle even further are: (1) use an anti-theft steering wheel lock to prevent the wheel from being turned. They are inexpensive, easily applied and removed; (2) use an audible alarm. Yes, they are obnoxious and loud but they also make your car less desirable because there is unwanted attention on it; and (3) If you don’t want or can’t spring for an alarm, placing decals that say you have an alarm and a small decoy flashing light on the top of the dash can do the trick. This will deter a lot of criminals looking for the easiest target.