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HOME & GARDEN

Top 5 summer home security tips

(NC) Most of us look forward to getting out of the house to enjoy the sun and warm weather. However, when planning your summer vacation or gearing up for a sunny weekend getaway, it's important to secure your home, too.

Marc Barbeau, property claims manager from Intact Insurance, shares five items to include on your going-away checklist that will help protect your home against theft or damage.

1. Shutter your home and invest in security. Not only can a monitored security system with a posted sign help deter thieves, it may also qualify you for a discount on your home insurance. Draw your curtains, secure all windows and doors, and make sure all locks function properly. Install jams in sliding windows and doors and a safety bar on patio doors to help prevent access.

2. Trust a friend. Always let your insurer know if you're going away for extended periods of time. Arrange to give a set of keys to a neighbour or family member who can visit your home regularly to make sure everything is in order while

you're away. This will help your home look lived-in and ensure any emergencies are covered.

3. Prevent water damage. In most provinces, water is the leading cause of home damage. Water damage is expensive and often difficult to eradicate. Identify and address water issues early to keep them from getting worse. Before travelling, turn off the main water supply valve to your plumbing system and drain any appliances that hold water.

4. Unplug. All electrical and electronic devices like computers, televisions and portable air conditioners should be unplugged in case a power surge occurs while you are away, which could damage your property.

5. Maintain a record. Create an inventory of your possessions. Take pictures or videos of your valuables and always keep receipts. These records may make it easier for police and your insurance company to track items should something be stolen during your absence.

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