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****NEWS RELEASE****

FOR RELEASE: AT WILL

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BEWARE OF FAIR-WEATHER THIEVES

The arrival of summer means sunny days, families traveling on vacation and burglars on the prowl, an insurance industry spokesman warned today.

"Summer is peak season for residential burglary because people are out of the house more and schools are generally not in session," according to Stephen J. Witte, government affairs director for the Missouri Insurance Information Service.

"The summer months provide ample opportunity for school-age juveniles, unfortunately, an age group often cited for burglary," Witte said.

Department of Public Safety statistics reveal that most residential burglaries occur during the daytime. In nearly half of the cases reported, the FBI reveals that a burglar enters through an unlocked door or window.

Witte said the most effective means of protection against burglary are often the most obvious.

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The following is a list of safety tips recommended by the insurance industry to help minimize your chances of being burglarized and to help you be prepared in the event of a loss:

- ❖ Install adequate locks on doors and windows and consistently use them. If you have a sliding glass door, secure it - it is the most common point of illegal entry.
- ❖ Buy or lease a security system. If you can't afford one, a decal or sign in the window that warns of such a system might be enough to scare off a burglar.
- ❖ Leave a light on and radio playing to give the appearance of someone being at home. Use timers to turn lights on and off at random.
- ❖ Install outdoor spotlights and floodlights to illuminate the area around the house, especially entranceways, and put the lights on sound or motion sensors.
- ❖ Notify neighbors of your vacation and have your mail and newspaper delivery stopped.
- ❖ Have your lawn neatly maintained.
- ❖ Prepare in advance for the possibility of a loss by inventorying all your property. Also, photographs or videotapes of valuables can help identify stolen goods and speed up settlement of insurance claims.

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