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Brokers Urge Ontario Travelers to Properly Secure their Homes before Last Minute Vacations

(Toronto, Ontario) As we head into the final weeks of summer, the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) is urging Ontario homeowners to properly secure their homes before taking off on any last minute holidays. Properly preparing and securing your home can prevent an attempted break-in or robbery.

Studies have shown that most burglars attack during the daytime when dense bushes and trees protect them from view, and the building appears unoccupied. To best protect your home, look at it from a burglar's perspective. What are the vulnerable parts? If you take a few simple and inexpensive steps to make sure your home is not an attractive target, you'll greatly reduce your chances of becoming a victim.

Before going on vacation, it is especially important to make your home appear inhabited. To fully protect your home, IBAO brokers encourage homeowners to enlist the help of trusted neighbours, family and friends. Here are some things you can do:

- Stop all mail delivery and cancel all other deliveries during the time you will be away.
- Arrange for a neighbour to cut the grass or shovel snow.
- Maintain normal lighting patterns by using electronic timers.
- Ask a neighbour to put one of their garbage bags in front of your house on collection day.
- Leave a radio on, with a timer if necessary to simulate normal use.
- Ask a neighbour to park in your driveway.
- Arrange for neighbours to pick up flyers.
- Don't talk about your vacation plans with strangers or service people.
- Use your work address on your luggage tags so a potential burglar won't know where your empty house is.
- If practical, remove valuables from your home. Small valuables should be stored in a safety deposit box.
- Lock garage door.

If you arrive home and realize your home has been robbed, leave the premise immediately. Never confront a burglar or block the exit route. Go immediately to a neighbour's home or nearby location and phone the police

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The Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) is a 'not for profit' association that represents and serves the interests of over 11,500 independent Property & Casualty Insurance Brokers in the Province of Ontario. For information about IBAO, visit www.ibao.org or www.ibao.org/blog to receive timely news and information updates. You can also follow IBAO on Twitter or join the IBAO Facebook Fan Page.

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