

MAKING TRAVEL SAFER AND MORE ENJOYABLE

Texas Department of Public Safety Stranded/Disabled Motorist Hotline:

1-800-525-5555

During the holiday season, most travelers will experience nothing more than a missed interstate exit, delayed plane, or too much pecan pie. Here are a few safety tips to help you avoid more serious problems when you travel.

PREPARE YOUR HOME

- Stop mail and newspaper delivery or have a neighbor collect them daily.
- Leave shades and blinds closed or in normal positions.
- Put at least two lights and a radio on automatic timers.
- Ask a neighbor to keep your property maintained (grass mowed, etc.)
- Have someone leave trash at your curb on garbage collection day.
- Have your neighbor park a car in your driveway occasionally.
- Tell a trusted neighbor where you are going and when you are expected to return.
- Leave emergency contact numbers with a trusted neighbor.
- Lock all windows and doors before you go.

PREPARE YOURSELF

- Make a record of your passport, credit cards, and travelers check numbers, as well as plane, train, or bus ticket numbers.
- Make sure you have enough prescription medication to last your trip.
- Clean out your wallet or purse. Don't take credit cards or important papers that you will not need.
- Identify all personal property (cameras, laptop computers, etc.) with your drivers license number. Identify all your luggage.
- Plan and know your travel route.
- Write down and carry emergency contact numbers such as wrecker services, AAA, relatives/friends in the area, and local police department.
- Have enough change and extra money for any possible vehicle repair or unexpected layovers.
- Bring a road atlas and maps.

ON THE ROAD

- Make sure your vehicle is road-worthy before you leave.
- Check for: Proper tire inflation and tread wear; oil and radiator coolant levels; belts and hoses; lights; first aid kit; flashlight; extra coolant and oil.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash. Use travelers checks or credit cards whenever possible.
- Keep careful tabs on your plane, train, or bus tickets-they are as valuable as cash.

- If you are driving, travel on main roads and use maps.
- When stopping, conceal valuables from sight, preferably in the trunk. If you stop overnight, remove luggage and other valuables from the car. ***Always lock your car doors.***
- If your car breaks down, turn on the flashers and open the hood or tie a white cloth to the antenna. If anyone stops to offer help, stay in your locked car and ask the person to call the police.
- If possible, carry a cellular phone.
- ***Take frequent breaks while traveling in an auto.***

IN YOUR HOTEL OR MOTEL

- Don't leave luggage unattended. Check your baggage with the staff if you can't go to your room immediately.
- If a front desk clerk mentions your room number loudly, request a new room.
- Don't enter the room if the door is ajar.
- A woman traveling alone should consider asking for an escort to her room or vehicle.
- Check behind curtains, under the bed, and in the bathroom, shower, and closets to make sure no one is hiding in the room.
- Locate fire exits, elevators, and public phones. Know the best way to get out of the building in an emergency.
- Use all auxiliary locking devices.
- Do not leave valuables in your hotel room. Place them in the hotel safe-deposit box. Always keep cash, credit cards, and keys with you.
- Do not answer the door in a hotel or motel room without knowing who is there. If a person claims to be an employee, call the front desk and verify who they are and why they are at your door.
- Be observant. Report any suspicious activity to the management.
- Don't leave the door open for any length of time, even if you are just going to the ice machine.
- If someone is loitering in the hall near your room, do not enter your room. Go directly to the front desk and report it.
- Look around before entering parking lots or garages. Park near lighted walk-ways when possible.

PERSONAL SAFETY

- Carry your purse close to your body-don't let it dangle. Carry your wallet in an inside coat or front trouser pocket.
- Always stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Trust your instincts.
- Avoid advertising that you are a tourist by the way you carry yourself or dress.
- Carry only cash that you need, and bills in small denominations. Don't flash your cash or jewelry.
- If members of your group separate, be sure they check in at prearranged times and locations.

- When jogging or walking, team up with a partner-especially if you go out in the early morning or in the evening.
- Avoid isolated roads, trails, and paths. Stick to well-lighted, well populated routes.
- Carry change for an emergency phone call.
- Consider carrying pepper spray or a whistle.