

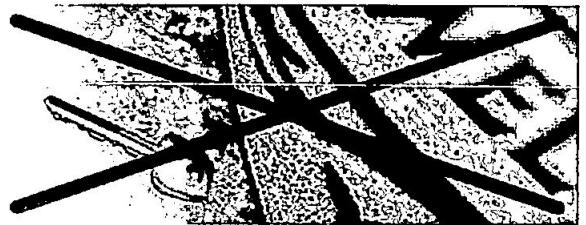
PROTECTING YOUR NEVADA INVESTMENT #020 - KEEPING YOUR SECOND HOME SAFE

If your Southern Nevada property is a second home, you are away a lot. Following these 18 simple steps can save you thousands of dollars and a lot of grief.

- 1.** Water is your greatest enemy. If you'll be away more than a few days, turn off the house water. Small leaks can cause massive damage in a very short time. Be sure not to turn off your landscaping water. In the desert, plants without water die fast. **WARNING:** If you have a hot water heating or a fire sprinkler system (both found in some condos), do not turn off the water.
- 2.** Ask a friendly trusted neighbor to come in once a month, turn on the water, flush all the toilets and run all the taps. This prevents sewer gas. They need to be sure to turn the water off after this procedure.
- 3.** Ask at least one friendly neighbor to collect mail and newspapers. Newspapers and flyers in your driveway or at your door are a very effective way to notify burglars that you are not home.
- 4.** Set up two or three lamps and a plug-in radio (not overly loud) in different rooms with timers. This will be obvious to neighbors but a casual observer will assume someone is at home.
- 5.** Do not turn off the air conditioning when you are away in summer. When your house gets much over 85 degrees (30 Celsius), damage can occur. Do not turn off the heat in winter. We get a few days below freezing every year and our houses are not designed to function when they get much below 45 degrees (7 Celsius).
- 6.** If you are going to be away more than a couple of months, notify the post office to hold your mail (unless that helpful neighbor is collecting it).
- 7.** Empty perishables from your fridge and freezer. If it fails for any reason, you may never get the smell out of the house. You don't need to, but if you turn off the

fridge and freezer, be sure to prop the doors open to prevent mildew.

- 8.** Turn the water heater to "Vacation" or to "Off." This saves a lot of energy.
- 9.** The open items in your pantry can attract ants and other nasty pests. Pur these items in sealed plastic bags or toss.
- 10.** Make sure you have a yard service if you are away for a while. Besides getting HOA fines, you are telling burglars that no one is home.
- 11.** Unplug everything you can. Small appliances and computers eat power on standby and, even if turned off, a serious power surge can fry the circuits.
- 12.** If you have a house phone, leave a message that you will be back shortly.
- 13.** Put fresh batteries in all the smoke detectors. The insesant beeping will alert burglars and drive neighbors crazy.
- 14.** Do not post your travel plans or other tell-tail information on social media.
- 15.** Close the fireplace flue to prevent energy loss and discourage pests. Be sure to put a big note near the switch or gas key reminding you it's closed.
- 16.** Close and secure pet doors.
- 17.** Add motion detector lights at the front and back. Burglars seem to really hate light.



- 18.** If you hid a key in any of the 100 most common locations, criminals will find it. At any home improvement store you can buy a lock box (\$35). Attach it to a rail, fence or something secure. Enter the code in your phone notes and give it to the right people in an emergency.

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