

From the desk of Officer Marshall Morehead

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The Seven P's

There's nothing better than getting a few days off. You work hard and you deserve a little R&R (rest and relaxation). So you take your family someplace that you can just kick back and relax a little. When you're finishing up that nice little vacation and pulling up into the driveway what will you see? A lot of that depends on what you did before you left.

I had a coach in college that introduced me to something called the "seven P's". For those of you who are not familiar with the "seven P's" they are Prior Proper Planning Prevents Pitiful Poor Performance. So in English it basically means that you need to try to plan out what you are going to do ahead of time if you want the desired results. Now, for my college football coach these were right up there with the "Golden Rule". Anytime something didn't work out right or go the way I had planned he would simply grin, shrug his shoulders nonchalantly and say "Did you follow the seven P's?" That has stayed with me ever since (especially because I've got a Road Patrol Captain that believes strongly in them as well) and I try to apply them to any and every situation.

So how do you apply the "seven P's" to your time away? It's simple. When you plan your trip you want to bring as little attention as possible to the fact that your house will be unattended. At the same time there are a few simple tactics you can apply to prevent unwanted problems.

- Don't "Tweet", post on Facebook, or any other social media that you are going to be out of town! (I know this is hard for some people, but it is an open invitation asking someone to break into your house)
- Call Walterboro Public Safety or Colleton County Sheriff's Office and have your residence placed on a "Directed Patrol" list. (Officers will check your property throughout the duration of your trip)
- Let your neighbors know that you'll be out of town and ask them to watch the house for you. (Especially if you have neighbors like mine. Refer back to my June 6th article about community crime watch)
- Make sure your shrubs are cut to give a clear line of sight to your windows and doors. (Limits places for bad guys to hide)
- Stop your mail service or have a neighbor or family member stop by to get you mail. (Nothing says "Hey I'm out of town" like a mailbox full to overflowing)
- You can leave a light on or use automatic timers or motion sensors for lights. (Anything to make bad guys second guess and go somewhere else)

Learn to use the "seven P's". Don't let that drive back into your driveway reveal an open door or a broken window that could have been prevented. Sometimes bad things do happen to good people, but many things can be prevented with a little prior proper planning. Thank you again for your time and for helping us to better serve you.