Tip from Sheriffs Office

Planning to travel over Easter weekend, or looking forward to a trip later this summer? Before you leave, take some simple steps to keep your home and belongings safe while you're away. Burglars are always on the lookout for empty houses. Protect yourself by NOT sharing your travel plans on social media sites. If a burglar knows you'll be away, your home could be an easy target.

Once you're packed and ready to leave, follow these safety tips to get your home ready:

• Make it look like someone is home. Leave lights on inside and out, or install motion-sensor or timer activated lights. Consider leaving a TV or radio on, or put them on a timer.

• Leave a car parked in the driveway, if possible.

• Check that all exterior doors and windows are securely locked. Don't hide your extra house key where it can be found easily, such as near a door.

• Close the blinds or curtains on windows.

• Hide jewelry, cash and other valuables in creative places. Avoid the usual hiding spots like under mattresses and in dresser drawers.

• Don't let mail, newspapers or packages pile up while you're away. Stop delivery or ask a neighbor to pick them up for you.

• Ask a trusted neighbor, friend or family member to keep an eye on your home. By reporting suspicious people or vehicles to local law enforcement, they may be able to help prevent crimes.

This message brought to you on behalf of North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper