

State and Local

Students warned to take steps against theft during holidays

By Dawn Butz
Staff Writer

As students finish up their final exams, sell their last textbooks and finish loading up their cars for Christmas break, the last thing on their minds is securing their apartments against theft.

But apartment complexes and campus dormitories resemble ghost towns over the Christmas holidays and become prime targets for burglars.

Bob Wiatt, director of security and University Police, says his department deals with a rash of missing property when students come back from the holidays.

He says students fail to use common sense before leaving, forgetting to lock doors and windows and even leaving hot plates or other appliances turned on.

Kristin Sayre, coordinator of the Off-Campus Housing Center, Tom Murray, assistant director of student affairs, and Wiatt all agree that thinking ahead and following a few simple guidelines will help to ensure that students don't find unpleasant surprises on their return to school.

Sayre says that now is the time to give notice to apartment managers to have locks installed. She warns students of the importance of quality locks and dead-bolt locks and suggests fitting a broom handle or dowel into sliding glass doors and windows.

Sayre also cautions students not to leave keys outside of the apartment or house, for if they can find them, so can an intruder.

Both Sayre and Cpl. David Luedke, an officer with the College Station Crime Prevention Unit, advise taking inventory of valuable possessions. Luedke says students should mark their valuables with a Texas driver's license number if possible. He recommends photographing valuables that can't be marked, but en-

gravers can be borrowed from local police departments and from the campus police.

Wiatt says students who are unwilling or unable to take portable valuables with them should lock the valuables in closets or drawers. Luedke says that although moving certain items home for the holidays may be difficult, these seem to be major targets of people who break into apartments.

Wiatt, Murray, Sayre and Luedke suggest that students ask a friend to gather newspapers and mail and keep watch over their homes. Sayre suggests that all deliveries be stopped.

She also advises students to notify their apartment managers of the dates they will be gone.

Both Wiatt and Murray agree that the bicycle theft is the largest theft problem on campus over holiday breaks.

Wiatt warns apartment renters not to leave bikes chained to balconies.

Murray says on-campus students can store bicycles in their rooms over the break, but mopeds are not allowed in rooms. The only advice Murray and Wiatt offer to moped owners is that they secure them with good locks.

Murray says dorm residents soon will be receiving a checklist of procedures to follow in closing their rooms for the break. He says resident advisers will be checking to see that the guidelines are followed before the winter break. Residence halls will close for the fall semester at 3 p.m. on Dec. 19 and will re-open at 10 a.m. on Jan. 12.

Wiatt says Physical Plant employees and campus police officers will go through all of the dorms to make sure doors are locked. He also says the Physical Plant employees will change the combinations on the combination

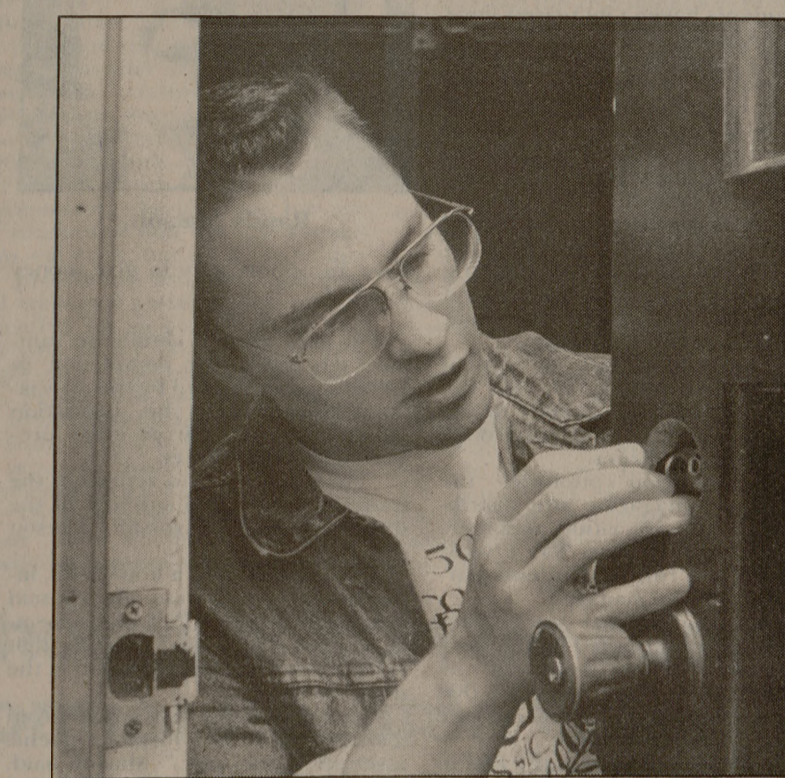


Photo by Tom Ownbey
Kyle Odom installs a deadbolt lock on his front door.

door locks as an added security precaution, but that they will reset them again when the students return.

He says first floor dorm windows and doors are easily accessible, as are the balcony dorms, so students should make sure these are securely locked.

Wiatt says in the past burglars also have gotten into dormitories through second floor lounge doors. He reminds students to make sure every exterior door is locked.

"You know, we can say this over and over again, and one third of the students will go off without their doors locked,"

Wiatt says. "This stuff is just common sense. By God, go through your own little world and lock up your own personal stuff."

College Station Utilities' energy specialist, Charlie Shear, says off-campus students leaving for the holidays should at least turn their electricity off. Ideally, Shear says, they should turn all indoor breakers off. He warns that refrigerators must be empty to do this in order to avoid spoilage, although the one breaker for the refrigerator can be left on.

Shear also advises students to leave their water faucets dripping — but not streaming — to avoid frozen pipes.

Drop in alien arrests tied to cold weather, Rio Grande flooding

EL PASO (AP) — High water in the Rio Grande contributed to an unusually low number of illegal-alien arrests in this area of the border during November, officials say.

Arrests traditionally decline in November, but the water and other factors caused the figure to drop more than 22 percent from the number apprehended a year before in the El Paso sector, said Joseph Aubin, a U.S. Border Patrol intelligence agent.

The sector stretches from Van Horn to the New Mexico-Arizona state line.

There were 15,553 illegal aliens arrested last month in the sector, compared to 30,786 in October.

Alien arrests totaled 19,808 in November 1985.

"The river is close to flooding and people are being warned to stay out

of it," Aubin said. "It's also been exceptionally cold in November, too. No one wants to take their clothes off and swim in deep water."

A sweeping immigration law signed by President Reagan Nov. 6, which included sanctions against employers hiring undocumented workers, has kept some aliens from attempting to cross the border, Aubin said.

The takeover of the Bridge of the Americas two weeks ago by Juarez's National Action Party also contributed to the decline, he said.

"When the bridge is closed, we have to have agents monitoring it," Aubin said.

During the National League of Cities conference in San Antonio Tuesday, a panel discussed the problems of immigration on local governments.

Medal of Honor winner, former A&M professor, dies

University News Service

Dr. Eli L. Whiteley, who was Texas A&M's only living Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, died Tuesday at 72.

A professor emeritus of soil and crop sciences, Whiteley retired in 1979 after a distinguished 30-year teaching career at A&M.

A 1942 A&M graduate, he entered the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant at the outbreak of World War II and fought with the 15th Infantry Regiment in Europe.

While leading his platoon in house-to-house fighting in the town of Sigolsheim, France, on Dec. 27, 1944, Whiteley was wounded severely and yet singlehandedly stormed three houses, killing seven defenders and capturing 23 others.

"In agony and with one eye pierced by a shell fragment, he shouted for his men to follow him

and remained at the head of his platoon until forcibly evacuated," according to his citation.

A park on the west side of the A&M campus is named in Whiteley's honor and a plaque in the Memorial Student Center also recognizes his heroism.

A&M System Chancellor Perry L. Adkisson and University President Frank E. Vandiver joined in praising the former faculty member.

"Eli Whiteley in his career was a soldier, one of the nation's most decorated heroes, a scholar and an educator," Adkisson said. "I knew him only as a scholar, an educator and a good friend."

Funeral services for Whiteley, a member of the U.S. Army's Infantry Hall of Fame, are pending with the Memorial Funeral Chapel in Bryan.

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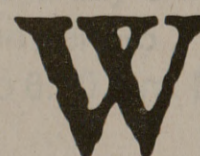
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