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ALAMO DOMINE

# Students can prevent holiday thefts

□ The University is not liable for items damaged or stolen from residence halls. UPD suggests students take valuables with them or mark them with an identification number.

By Michelle Lyons  
 THE BATTALION

not see inside.

"While you're out window shopping for Christmas gifts," he said, "there are people window shopping at your apartment."

Other theft deterrents are light timers, Lemay said. Timers that turn the lights on and off give the appearance of someone being home.

"Lighting is the least expensive, most effective crime prevention tool there is," she said.

University police also suggest having newspaper subscriptions and mail stopped for the duration of the break.

"A big stack of newspapers building up outside of a residence is a dead giveaway that no one is home," Kretzschmar said.

Rusty Thompson, assistant director of residence life and housing, said on-campus residents have been sent a letter offering tips on securing their rooms during the holidays.

"One thing we try to remind students to do is to check with their parents about what kind of insurance they have," Thompson said. "The University is not responsible

for anything that is lost or damaged, so would advise taking valuables home."

During the break, all student ID cards that normally grant access into the residence halls will be deactivated Dec. 16 at 1 p.m., keeping students from gaining access to halls.

**"While you're out window shopping for Christmas gifts, there are people window shopping at your apartment."**

— Lt. Bert Kretzschmar  
 University Police Department

"It keeps people from coming in and wandering around the building when they don't belong there," Thompson said.

Securing a room for the holidays does not end with theft-proofing, University police said, and students need to be aware of how to winterize residences.

Lemay said off-campus students should check with complex managers and find out what steps they should take to ready their apartments for a possible freeze.

In the past, students have gone home only to return to a damp apartment due to broken pipes.

Thompson recommends that on-campus students take items off the floor in case pipes burst and the room floods.

These items include stereo speakers and other electric items and virtually anything that could be ruined by water.

As far as transportation, students can do many things to be safe.

Thompson suggests students who leave their cars on campus to park in Parking Area 48 near UPD and suggests students either take their bicycles home with them or lock them in their rooms.

For the ride home, students can lock valuable belongings in the trunk, University police said, and it is important to make sure the vehicle is in working, roadworthy condition.

Students should also let someone know when they are leaving and which road they will be taking.

Although UPD will patrol campus and the College Station and Bryan Police Departments will patrol the cities, Kretzschmar said there are still steps to be taken.

"Basically, this is all about looking after your personal safety," he said.

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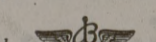
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