



Insurance Brokers Urge Ontarians to Take Precautions While Away this Spring Break

(TORONTO), March 5, 2009, In the name of safety and prevention, the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) would like to remind Ontario residents to take precautions to keep their homes safe while away for an extended period of time this spring break.

Spring break is a particularly vulnerable time for home break-ins. Often thieves loiter around neighbourhoods to prey on homes that appear to be empty. It is especially important to make your home appear inhabited during the spring months as fresh snow can still be on the ground meaning that an empty house is more visible to potential thieves.

IBAO warns Ontarians to take precautions to fully protect their homes and reduce the likelihood of break-ins and recommends the following preventative measures:

- Cancel all deliveries and arrange for a neighbour to pick up your mail
- Arrange for a neighbour to shovel spring snow
- Maintain normal lighting patterns and leave a radio on by using electronic timers
- Ask a neighbour to put one of their garbage bags in front of your house on collection day
- Ask a neighbour to park in your driveway
- Don't talk about your vacation plans with strangers or service people
- Use your work address on your luggage tags so a potential burglar won't know where your empty house is
- Store small valuables in a safety deposit box
- Make sure all doors are locked including your garage door

“Ontarians need to take extra safety precautions while away from their homes,” said IBAO CEO Randy Carroll. “An important step is to tell someone you trust that you will be away, how long you will be absent, whether or not you will have a house sitter and finally a number where you can be reached in case of emergencies.”

IBAO advises Ontarians that in the event their home has been broken into to go immediately to a neighbour's home or nearby location to call the police. In some instances the burglars may still be in the house. IBAO also recommends that Ontarians should never confront a burglar or block their exit route.

Insurance brokers are known for their commitment to their community and keeping Ontarians safe. Providing warnings about potential vulnerability this spring is an example of how insurance brokers look out for their community's possessions and peace of mind.

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The Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario (IBAO) is a 'not for profit' association that represents and serves the interests of over 10,000 independent Property & Casualty Insurance Brokers in the Province of Ontario.

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