



Vacation time is with us again, and you will be taking off for distant places for fun and relaxation. Here are some pointers that will help you to avoid unpleasant incidents, or worse, that could turn fun time into a nightmare.

Everyone planning a vacation trip should plan well in advance for complete safety. This should include not only the vehicle that transports us to our vacation spot, but the safety and security of our unattended homes.

Tell the police or sheriff's office how long you'll be gone and where you can be reached in emergency. Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on your house. Use a timer switch to turn house lights on at night and off in the daytime. Stop deliveries of newspapers and mail. Lock all doors and windows, but don't lower shades.

Modern automatic gas and electric appliances are considered foolproof, but to be entirely free of worry while away, leave nothing to chance. Shut off utilities—gas and water at the main valves, electricity except refrigerators, freezers and lights.

Hoses on cloths and dish washers have been known to burst due to extended wear and tear and flood the laundry room or kitchen. It is one thing for it to happen when you are home, but quite another thing if it occurs when you are gone a week or two. If for whatever reason you cannot shut the water off to your home before you leave on vacation, at least turn off the water valves on your clothes, and dish washer.

Take the car to your serviceman. Tell him you're going on a trip, and ask him to check all safety features— tires (including spare), steering system, brakes, front-end alignment, hoses and belts, exhaust system, windshield washers and wipers, all lights and all fluid levels.

Stock up or check up on all emergency equipment— flares, portable lights, first aid kit and manual, fire extinguisher, tow strap or chain, jack and lug wrench, and any other tools you might need. If the children will be with you, take along games to keep them from getting restless.

Avoid overloading your car, or it will be sluggish on acceleration and will require longer braking distances. Too much weight in the trunk can affect steering and headlight aim, and may increase danger of skids.

Don't pile up a load in the rear seat that will block rearview mirror vision. Don't clutter the rear-window ledge with objects that could become missiles in a sudden stop.

Make sure that you take with you all the papers and documents you might need, such as driver licenses, vehicle registration, hospitalization card, auto insurance company identification card (may be needed in case of accident or for bail bond), address book with phone numbers for emergency calls, credit cards, travelers checks or blank bank checks instead of a large amount of cash.

Check well ahead of time on the status of your auto insurance, especially to make sure your coverage meets the legal demands of the states you will visit.

With your mind at rest about home security and safety, you're ready for the "Load up!" Signal to your passengers and the start of a pleasant, carefree vacation trip.

Be sure that everyone buckles their seat belt and locks the doors. In case of an accident, those held in their seats with properly adjusted shoulder and lap belts are less likely to be seriously injured in an auto accident.



You want to reach your vacation site as soon as possible to start your favorite pastime, whether its fishing, boating, mountain climbing or what-have-you. But don't try to drive so long that fatigue will dull your alertness.

If you reach your fun spot in good shape, fully rested and relaxed, your holiday activities will be the most pleasant.

But then don't forget to start home in plenty of time for a safe and pleasant return trip. Too many vacationers spoil the memory of a good time by trying to drive too long at the end in order to get home in time for work.

Don't skip meals because you're in a hurry to "get there." Low blood sugar is a common cause of fatigue and drowsiness. Stop and eat regular light meals along the way. Munch on fruits and cookies as you drive.

There is always the temptation to drive when there are fewer cars on the road, and there is no sun glare. The urge is to "cover ground" while the temperature is lower. But don't forget that it is much more dangerous to drive at night. More than half of all traffic deaths occur after dark.

Vacation driving should be fun driving. Watch your step and keep it that way.

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