



It doesn't happen often, but when news gets out about cruise line employee theft, it should heighten awareness for travelers' individual security. A cruise line office employee who booked passengers was arrested for using the information to rob homes while travelers were at sea.

Knowing passengers would be away for from one to two weeks, the thief's gang used pass keys to steal cash, jewelry and other items. It sounds too simple to be believed, but it happened, and would have gone on if the police investigation hadn't figured it out. The pattern of the crimes were traced back to certain of the cruise line's sailings and list of passengers who were robbed.

There are very basic precautions you can take to prevent such crimes from happening to you. If you're planning a cruise or other trip that will take you away from home for a week or more, be sure to have a relative or someone else check your house or apartment at least once a day. They shouldn't visit at the same time, but show up at different hours.

Additionally, your house watchers should pick up any newspapers, mail or other items that could be stacked outside your doorstep. Better still, for the time you're gone, cancel all deliveries.

Set up several lights-on/off timers near windows that give the impression that someone is there, especially for evenings and nights. You can also use the timers to turn radios and TVs on and off. Set them each at different on/off schedules for the appearance of activity within.

If your travels take you away frequently for a week or more, sign up with a home alarm service. This will assure you maximum security and peace of mind while you're gone.