

Crime Prevention News

To Enhance the Safety of Faculty, Staff and Students

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Spring Break Safety

Spring break is right around the corner and with the Iowa winter coming to a close, some fun in the sun is way overdue. Spring break can be a great time with friends having "fun in the sun", but it can also

turn into a "nightmare" if you are not careful.

This article will hopefully give you some information to reduce your chances of your spring break turning from a dream come true to a nightmare. **Drinking:** The legal drinking age in all 50 states in the United States is 21. There are significant criminal penalties for underage possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages, depending on the jurisdiction. There are also severe criminal penalties for the illegal possession and/or use of fake identifications. Generally, in heavily visited spring break areas, police setup sting operations to capture fake IDs. Buying, possessing, or using most drugs is illegal. Drugs can affect you both physically and mentally in unexpected ways. Taking any drug is a risky move, especially if you are mixing drugs and alcohol.

the minimum amount of cash that you will need, including a little backup. Traveler's checks are your best bet when on vacation. If you have extra cash, leave it in your hotel room, hidden from sight. Make sure your friends and relatives know where you will be vacationing, when you will depart, and when you expect to return. Call friends or family members to let them know that you have arrived and returned safely. If you are robbed, don't resist - give up any money, jewelry, or other valuables. You can always replace material things! Call 911 as soon as you can. Don't horseplay or climb on balconies.

Never sit on railings and always keep both feet on the floor at all times. Falls from balconies, even those on lower floors, can be fatal. Don't overcrowd elevators. Too much weight can cause a malfunction.

"Never allow members of your party to leave alone with strangers"

Safe Partying: Go partying with people you can rely on. Stick together, look out for each other and make sure everyone's safe. Especially watch out for friends who appear intoxicated. If a friend feels sick, don't leave them alone. If you feel sick, ask someone to look out for you. If a member of your group passes out, turn them on their side to prevent choking and call 911 immediately. Don't drink and drive. Before you go out, designate a non-drinking driver. Remember to buckle up! Watch out for your drink and never accept an open drink from someone you don't know. If you have to leave your drink for any time, be sure you leave it with someone responsible who will watch it to ensure it doesn't get spiked with one of the easily obtained "date-rape" drugs, such as GHB, Ketamine, or Rohypnol.

Personal Security: Travel with someone you know and trust, and preferably with a larger group. Never allow members of your party to leave alone with strangers. Always travel in well-lighted areas. Don't carry all of your credit or bank cards in your wallet or purse. Carry



"To Serve and Protect"

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Spring Break Safety (cont.)

No matter where you are going for spring break, be it to the beaches or to the border, the University of Iowa Police is urging everyone to be cautious during spring break. Keep track of your valuables no matter where you go, especially at the beach. Portable stereos, wallets, purses, keys, clothes, backpacks and surf boards are the types of things thieves like to steal.

Do not leave your keys in or around your vehicle, safety pin the key into a pocket, strap or zipper pouch, or string the key around your neck. Velcro wrist or ankle pockets are also available. Hiding valuables in glove compartments or under vehicle seats may get them stolen. Thieves sometimes monitor popular parking lots. Lock valuables in vehicle trunks. Rolling up windows and locking doors, plus anti-theft devices and alarms, will help prevent auto theft.

At the U.S.-Mexico border, law enforcement officers on both sides have tightened security to curb drunken driving.

If you go to Mexico, respect the laws, Mexico's a great country, but you've got to go by the rules and have a plan. Oftentimes college students drink more than they intend.

The Institute for Public Strategies and numerous law enforcement agencies will sometimes conduct Operation Safe Crossing during spring breaks. Officers will be checking identification and enforcing alcohol and public safety laws at the Mexico border crossing areas.

Police will turn away everyone under 18 who isn't accompanied by a guardian, detain people with false identification and enforce curfew. All intoxicated pedestrians and drivers could be arrested.

Remember: intoxication isn't glamorous.



Be aware of alcohol poisoning. According to a University of Wisconsin study, 75 percent of college males and 43.6 percent of females reported being intoxicated on a daily basis during spring break. Nearly half of the males and more than 40 percent of the females also reported being drunk to the point of vomiting or passing out at least once during break.



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Bring sufficient money for gas, food and shelter, and plan to take extra emergency money for unexpected problems . If driving, respect speed limits, traffic laws, get sufficient rest and drive safely.

Confirm reservations before leaving town and let your parents/guardians know how and where to reach you.

Know your traveling companions well and look out for each other.

If you choose to drink, do so in moderation and do not operate a vehicle.

Do not set a drink where something could be placed in it and do not accept drinks from others. Always watch the bartender pour your drink, not all bartenders are on the "up and up" some might be working with the perpetrators to slip date rape drugs into your drink.

Do not involve yourself in any activity that might jeopardize your safety or increase your risk of being victimized, or lead to your arrest.

Protect your property; do not openly exhibit large amounts of cash and make sure to lock your vehicle and hotel/motel room.

Before leaving for break, unplug unnecessary appliances and other electronic devices, and make sure that your room or apartment is secure.

Carry your wallet in an inside coat pocket or side trouser pocket. Carry your handbag tightly under your arm with the clasp toward your body. Never let it dangle by the handle.

Keep your wallet or handbag closed and with you at all times. Never put it on the seat beside you, on the counter next to you or under a seat when dining.

Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you; trust your instincts. Stay in well-lit and well-traveled areas.

Walk with your head up, shoulders back and your eyes scanning the people around you.

If you are expecting guests, do not open your door until you know it is the right person(s). Always ask to see identification of visitors you don't know.

If attacked, don't panic! Get a good description, direction traveled, etc. and report the incident to the police as soon as possible.

Report any suspicious activities to the police as soon as you can: Where, What, Who, When and How. Arrests, citations and incidents of sexual assault, simple assault and other crimes typically show an increase in resort towns during spring break. Medical emergencies including drug reactions, drug overdoses and alcohol poisoning also increase during this time. We want our students to be safe. Following a few simple tips can go a long way in making sure everyone has a good time.