

NEWS BLAST



Home Security

Keeping Your House Safe While Away on Vacation

MANY AMERICANS take a vacation during the summer, heading out of town, often a few hundred miles away – or sometimes further afield.

While you are away, your home will likely be sitting empty and that could be a target for thieves. But there are precautions you can take to thwart them.

Buy a home security system

A home security system is probably the very best way to protect your home, aside from having someone stay there while you are gone. There are a number of systems and services on the market, so you should take your time to figure out which one best suits your needs and budget.

Keep quiet about your plans

While you may find it hard to resist the urge to tell all of your contacts on social media that you are heading off on an exotic holiday, you should not announce your plans – and should also refrain from providing daily updates and selfies of your adventures. It won't hurt you to post that information when you return.

While you likely don't have to worry about your friends and family robbing your home, criminals online may lurk among your friends' contacts.

Remind your children to also refrain from posting their activity on social media.

Make your home look lived in

Make your home look occupied by:

- Installing timer switches on a few lights and even your TV, so that they turn on and off at certain times.
- If you park your car outside your home, ask a friend to periodically back out and park it differently to make it seem like someone has driven the car.
- If there's a swimming pool, keep the water in it circulating.
- Don't cancel your lawn service and make sure to keep your automatic sprinklers going on their timers.
- Ask the post office to put a hold on delivering mail.

Additional security measures

- Make sure all windows and doors are security locked.
- Put in a secondary blocking device on sliding doors and windows so that they can't be opened if a burglar successfully unlocks them.
- Install exterior security lights with motion sensors that turn on when someone approaches the house.
- If you have a security system in place, call the security company to let them know you'll be gone.

If you want to go even further in protecting your home, you can:

- Disconnect the garage door opener and lock it manually.
- Move valuables like expensive jewelry to your bank safety deposit box or a home safe.
- Move any valuable furnishings out of sight from anyone peering through your windows. ❖



CONTACT US >>>

PLACER
INSURANCE AGENCY

If you have any questions regarding any of these articles or have a coverage question, please call us at:

Placer Insurance Agency

5 Sierra Gate Plaza, Second Floor
Roseville, California 95678

Phone: (916) 784-1008

Toll Free: (800) 642-5037

E-mail: newsletter@placerins.com

License No.: 0C66701

Watercraft Coverage

Understanding Your Boat Insurance Policy

IF YOU HAVE a boat or are considering buying one, you should understand your insurance obligations and what is permitted under your coverage.

Owning a boat opens you up to a whole new set of liabilities, particularly property damage to a third party or physical injury to someone else.

Policies also include a number of exclusions that you need to be aware of so that you are not caught in a situation where you may not be covered.

In this article we look at a number of insurance, risk and liability issues that can arise when you own a boat.

Understand where you can go

Most personal boat policies include geographical limitations on where you can take your vessel.

If you stray out of this area, the insurance company may deny your claim if you have an accident outside your permitted zone of operation.

You should study your policy to make sure that it covers the areas that you will be boating in and, if the policy is too restrictive, you can work with us to negotiate with your insurer to expand your navigational limitations.

Alcohol

Like drunken driving, drunken boating is a criminal offense. For many people boating and having a few drinks go together, but your judgment is impaired when navigating a boat just as it is when you are driving a car.

All states have laws on drunken boating, and for good reason: There were over 4,000 boating accidents that contributed to more than 600 deaths in 2015, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. Alcohol use is the top cause of boating accidents.

Uninsured-boater coverage

Unlike vehicle insurance laws, many states do not require liability insurance for boats and if an uninsured boater smacks into your vessel, you'll want to make sure that you and your occupants are covered.

Uninsured-boater coverage protects owners from potential liabilities for bodily injury to your passengers. If there is damage to your boat, it will be covered by the property portion of your policy.

Understand policy exclusions

When shopping with us for a boat policy, you should be clear about how you will use the boat and all of the specifics of your vessel. For example, if you plan to use it to pull wakeboarders or waterskiers, you need to tell us. In some cases, these activities may not be covered under your policy.

Also, if you are involved in more than leisurely activities, like competition in the above activities or scuba diving, any injuries or damage sustained may not be covered.

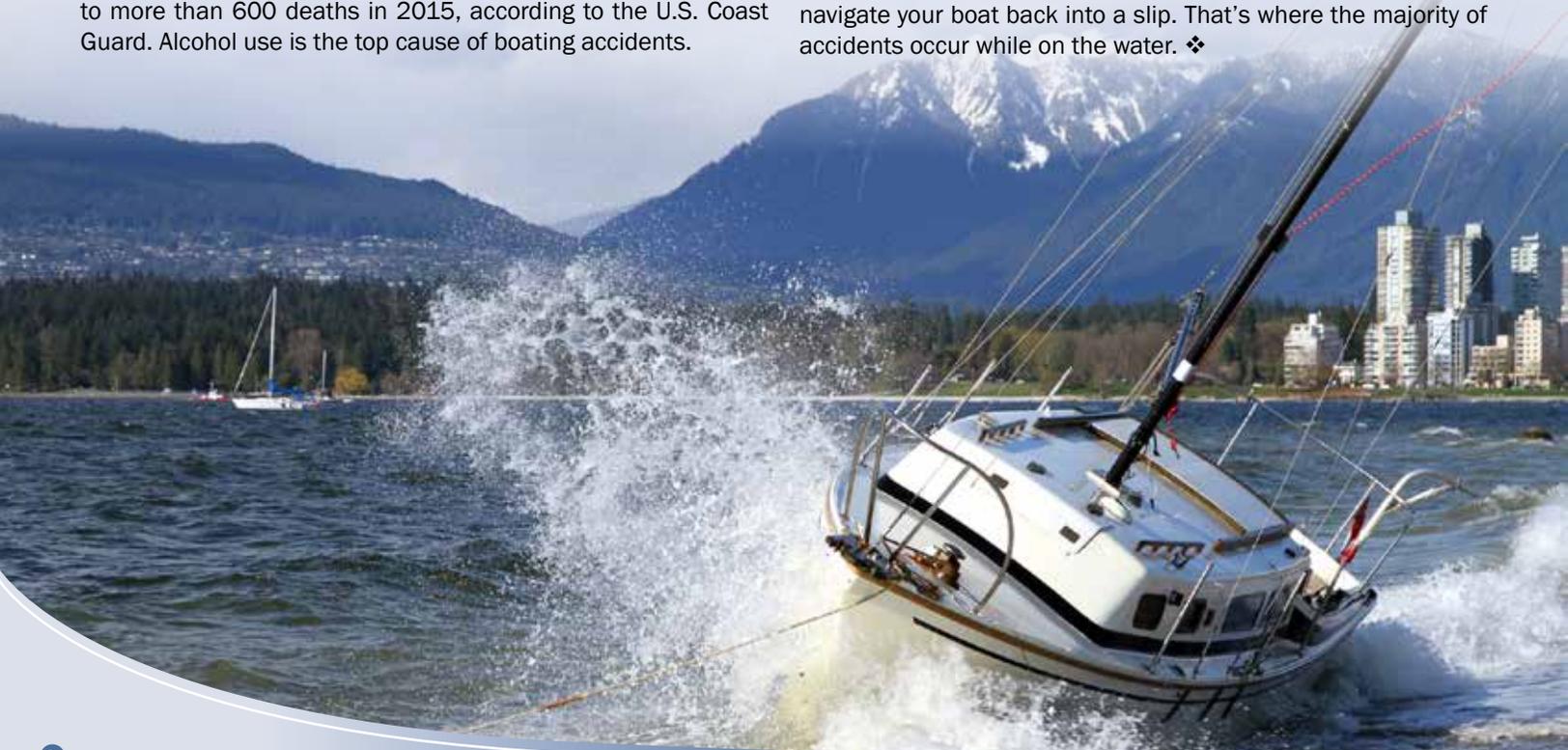
And if you want to help another boater in distress, your policy will likely not cover any damage you sustain or cause when towing another boat.

You can often get these exclusions removed, but it will cost you more in terms of premium.

Make safety the top priority

Whatever you do, you should make safety your top priority. If you are new to boating, you should seriously consider taking a course on how to safely navigate your vessel – and especially understand the rules in terms of maximum speeds in certain areas.

You should also learn to how to dock properly and how to navigate your boat back into a slip. That's where the majority of accidents occur while on the water. ❖



Income Protection

Why You Should Consider Disability Insurance

WHAT WOULD happen if you were permanently injured or became too ill to work?

You might qualify for disability payments from Social Security, but would you be able to survive on the average payout of \$1,171 per month? Maybe you have some savings, but would it be adequate to cover your living expenses until you're old enough to collect retirement benefits?

If you answered "no" to either of these questions, you should consider buying disability insurance.

Disabilities are surprisingly common: One in three women and one in four men will have a disability that keeps them out of work for 90 days or more at some point during their working lifetime, according to The Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education.

Disability insurance basically protects your income, which is especially important during your peak earning years between 40 and 55 years of age. Not only do most people earn their highest salary during this time, they actively use it to pay down debt and save for retirement.

As most insurers won't offer disability policies to individuals over the age of 59, now is likely your best time to buy one that will carry you through to full retirement age.

As with health and life insurance, the older you are, the more expensive disability insurance becomes. If you have health problems, it may even become difficult to secure – if at all. You may still be able to purchase a policy, but it may include exclusions for health issues such as back problems or ailments related to high blood pressure for which you've regularly sought treatment.

Before you pursue an individual disability insurance policy, check with your employer about group policies. If the company you work for offers one, you may be able to obtain coverage without submitting to a medical examination. This can make the process easier and save you money.

If your employer does not offer supplemental disability insurance, we can work with you to find an insurance company that offers guaranteed renewable policies with fixed costs and terms.

In general, experts recommend a disability insurance policy that will replace 60 to 70% of your salary.

Two types of coverage

Short-term disability insurance. A short-term policy typically is designed to replace 80% or more of your gross income for a short duration of time, like 60 to 180 days.

Long-term disability insurance. These policies typically kick in after you've been out of work for an extended period of time, such as 180 days.

Long-term policies typically cover only about 60% of your salary. The coverage can last for years and even through the rest of your life, depending on the design of the policy. ❖

How it works

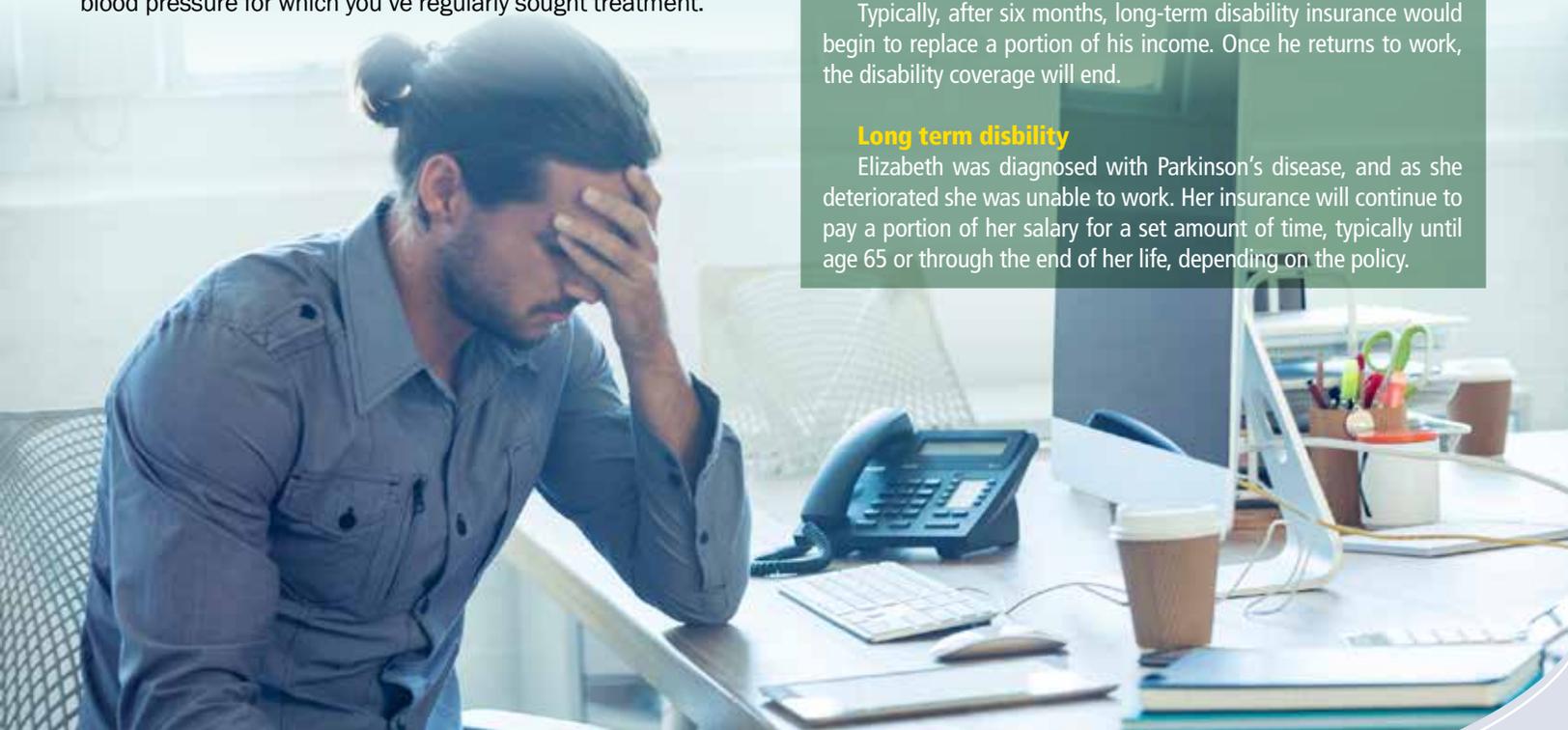
The car accident

Bob suffered extensive injuries in a car accident and was unable to return to work for three years.

Typically, after six months, long-term disability insurance would begin to replace a portion of his income. Once he returns to work, the disability coverage will end.

Long term disability

Elizabeth was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and as she deteriorated she was unable to work. Her insurance will continue to pay a portion of her salary for a set amount of time, typically until age 65 or through the end of her life, depending on the policy.



Produced by Risk Media Solutions on behalf of Placer Insurance Agency. This newsletter is not intended to provide legal advice, but rather perspective on recent regulatory issues, trends and standards affecting insurance as well as instructional articles on protection and managing personal risk. Please consult your broker for further information on the topics covered herein. Copyright 2017.

Personal Protection

Identity Theft Goes Beyond Online: Shred Docs

MUCH HAS been made of people's identities being stolen through cyber attacks and other online means, but the majority of identity thefts are still being carried out the old-fashioned way by criminals finding documents bearing social security numbers and other personal information.

Identity theft is a growing problem with consumers reporting more than 490,000 incidents in 2015, up an astounding 47% from the year prior, according to the Federal Trade Commission.

Certainly, a good reason for this increase is online data theft, but a surprising number of Americans are still having their personal information stolen because of improper disposal of paper documents.

The best way to combat this kind of identity theft is by regularly shredding paper documents when it's time to dispose of them. But what documents should you shred and which ones can you just toss in the recycling bin? Here are our tips:

Anything containing your social security number – This is the number one bit of data that identity thieves want to get a hold of. With your social security number they can open checking accounts and credit cards – and sometimes even take out loans.

Your social security number can be found on a number of documents, including:

- Pay stubs
- Tax returns
- Medical bills
- Health insurance cards
- Loan statements

Bank and mortgage statements – First off, you should keep these statements for up to seven years for tax audit purposes. After that time, there is no need to keep them and you should dispose of them.

These documents should be shredded. While they sometimes may contain your social security number, they do contain your bank account statements and crafty scammers can produce bogus checks that they can use to cash checks from your accounts.

Utility and other bills – Utility bills may contain personally identifiable information. Experts recommend that you keep these bills no more than a year. To avoid having your data exposed, you should then shred them.

Anything with your signature – It's highly recommended that you shred any documents that have your signature on them. That's because a clever criminal can learn to copy your signature, and combined with other personally identifiable information they get their hands on, they could open accounts in your name and do real damage to your credit.

Receipts – While you may want to keep some receipts for your tax records, any others you don't need to shred and can toss into the recycling bin. Credit card receipts don't contain your entire credit card number, so you don't run the risk of someone gaining access to your card should they come across these receipts. ❖

