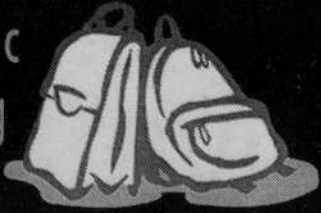


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Students can take steps toward safety

■ Giving your home a lived-in look may help to deter potential thieves over break

By Brian Goodell
Oregon Daily Emerald

Winter break is normally a time for family and friends to gather and celebrate the holidays together. It also means many of Eugene area apartments and dorm rooms will be vacant for the next three to four weeks.

Officials from University Housing, the Eugene Police Department and the University Office of Public Safety are asking students to perform a number of small tasks to ensure a safe and happy return to school.

Public Safety Supervisor Joan Saylor said there are people out there who will take advantage of an empty apartment, and there are a lot of measures students can take to prevent theft.

"Folks who know students are gone will come over and check around to see what they can take," Saylor said. "As people begin to

How to prevent theft while away for break

Lock and secure all doors and windows.

Make arrangements for a friend to pick up newspaper and mail.

Close window curtains on the ground floor; leave others open.

Get a timer for lights so they come on at night.

SOURCE: Office of Public Safety, Joan Saylor

leave we will increase our patrol around the dorms."

Saylor said crime is a much bigger problem with off-campus housing. She said the best thing students can do is let a friend know they will be gone and ask them to watch out for suspicious activity.

Saylor added that students need to lock and secure all of their doors, close their first story window curtains, and ask someone to collect newspaper and mail deliv-

Turn to **Safety**, Page 18A

Downtown Eugene offers holiday fun

■ From costume parties to concerts, there is no loss of entertainment in the area

By Amy Jennaro
Oregon Daily Emerald

For students spending their New Year's in Eugene, the holiday will offer a lot more than just Dick Clark and the ball drop. Many hotels, businesses and organizations across the community are planning alternatives to a night in front of the television.

The biggest celebration is First Night, an annual, alcohol-free national event that is put together locally by Downtown Events Management Inc., the First Night Eugene board and local businesses, according to Steven Remington, general manager of DEMI.

"The event is really community-driven," Remington said.

He said the celebration utilizes over 300 volunteers and draws 8,000 to 10,000 people every year.

According to Remington, the event is held in 16 different venues in the downtown area and showcases 60 different performers from the local arts community. He said the downtown was chosen as the principal location because of its centrality to Eugene citizens.

"We wanted to have the vitality of downtown," he said. "Downtown is the heart of Eugene."

"The unique element is that we

encourage everyone to come down together," said Ellen Mitchell, chairwoman for First Night Eugene.

For students who want to attend a smaller event, many local hotels are holding their own celebrations.

The Doubletree Hotel is planning an R&B-inspired dance party with the band Body and Soul, said Bliss Hamilton, the front office director.

"We all decided to do something that was upbeat and fun and would appeal to all ages," Hamilton said.

She said the event has been in the works for the past year. The celebration offers a variety of entertainment including karaoke for would-be performers and a quiet bar for those that want to get away from the noise, she said.

"The whole hotel is open for the night," Hamilton said.

The Red Lion Hotel decided to take an alternate route in their New Year's celebration, said sales manager Todd Iseri.

The hotel will hold a costume party, complete with a costume contest.

Iseri said an important element in planning the event was keeping it affordable.

"We're not going to be one of these places that costs you \$50 to \$100 to go out and have a good time," Iseri said.

According to Iseri, the event offers raffles, prizes and champagne at midnight.

"This is the biggest [New Year's event] we've done," he said.



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