

To all the holiday yard thieves and porch pirates: Bah humbug!



Consumer Watch
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Columnist

A few years ago, thieves stole some of our Christmas decorations from our front yard. After carefully laying out our decorations, ensuring that all the lights worked and checking everything twice, we had a yard that (although a little

more tasteful) was at least a little competitive with our local Clark W. Griswold (who lived just down the street).

One evening, we arrived home to find that someone had stolen a religious-themed sign that was the centerpiece of our decorations. Later, we found that police had busted some neighborhood kids who had stolen items from several yards, with no obvious motive other than meanness.

Apparently, we have a lot of company: an insurancequotes.com study

found that nearly 23 million U.S. homes have reported stolen yard decorations in the past year.

The study highlights a disturbing fact: Grinches are among us and are increasingly targeting homeowners. And it doesn't stop at stealing signs and lighted deer, either; thieves are also on the prowl for packages delivered and left on front porches. "Porch piracy" is increasing rapidly, with about 26 million police reports filed in the past year.

Insurancequotes.com put together

its report, called Holiday Hazards by the Numbers, to reinforce the idea that we need to be more aware of the dangers that can come with the holidays and protect ourselves accordingly.

"During the holidays, certain crimes and home hazards increase. Homeowners need to take precautions and make sure they have the right insurance to protect their finances," said Laura Adams, senior insurance analyst at insur-

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