

Kiwis make it easy for thieves to steal jewellery

Auckland – 21 August 2018 – Poor security is a worrying trend among customers with high-value jewellery, says AA Insurance.

A recent review of jewellery claims data from November 2015 to January 2018 showed customers have limited and often non-existent security in place to protect expensive jewellery when it wasn't worn, says Amelia Macandrew, Customer Relations Manager, AA Insurance. This included keeping items on top of bedroom dressers, in bedside drawers and wardrobe cupboards.

“Keeping your jewellery stored in obvious places makes theft so much easier and quicker for thieves, especially when an alarm sounds and they want to leave your home in a hurry,” she says. “Most people wouldn't leave thousands in cash on their bedside table or dresser, so why take the chance with your jewellery.”

In one example, an AA Insurance customer had almost \$20,000 worth of gold jewellery stolen from her jewellery box sitting on her dresser. The thief reached in through the cat door to unlock the back door; unfortunately, there was no house alarm.

Another customer had \$37,000 worth of jewellery taken after thieves smashed through the glass in the door. The unmonitored alarm sounded, but the thieves made the most of their limited time by taking jewellery, including a Rolex watch and diamond ring, as well as \$38,000 worth of camera equipment that was all kept in the master bedroom wardrobe.

“While external security measures, such as monitored alarms, deadlocks and windows locks, can deter burglaries,” continues Amelia. “It is once the home is breached that additional security really comes into play. Keeping jewellery in a safe, which has been secured to the floor or wall, adds an extra layer of protection should a break-in, or even a fire, occur.

“We accept all legitimate claims but do urge customers to take reasonable care of how they look after their jewellery, including where they store it. While modern items are often easy to replace, we've had some distressed customers who've discovered too late that their treasured family pieces are irreplaceable.”

“Talk to your insurer about ways you can protect your jewellery. At AA Insurance, jewellery has an adjustable event limit that can be changed if a customer needs extra cover. We ask customers to specify a higher event limit for jewellery that's valued over \$5,000, to sufficiently cover the cost if its stolen,” says

Amelia. “However, with 21 per cent of customers specifying a higher jewellery event limit on their contents policy – 24 per cent of these over \$20,000 – we encourage customers to consider their security as well, to avoid the stress of losing their precious items.”

AA Insurance tips on keeping your jewellery safe:

1. There are a wide range of security options to help protect your home that often complement each other, such as alarms (especially monitored), security lights, and deadlocks on doors and windows. But they'll only work if you use them – even if you aren't out for long.
2. Don't leave door keys hanging in a lock that can be reached from an open window or cat door.
3. Make sure your jewellery, or the container in which it's kept, cannot be seen from the outside of your home, or better yet, keep it well hidden.
4. Don't be tempted to keep jewellery in traditional places that are easy for you to access, such as on your bedroom dresser or in a side table drawer, as they'll be easy access for burglars too.
5. Consider keeping your most valuable or treasured pieces in a safe that has been secured to the wall or floor or, if not often worn, in a safety deposit box at the bank.
6. Check if your insurer has an event limit for jewellery. AA Insurance customers are encouraged to specify items valued over \$5,000, to sufficiently cover its value.
7. Ensure you have an up-to-date New Zealand valuation of your items. This helps speed things along if you need to make a claim.

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About AA Insurance

AA Insurance is an independently operated, New Zealand-based joint venture between the New Zealand Automobile Association (NZAA) and Vero Insurance New Zealand Limited (VINZL). Since 1994 we have demonstrated trusted expertise in home, contents and car insurance in New Zealand, and in 2018 introduced commercial small business insurance. We underwrite our own policies and sell direct to New Zealanders. Our more than 700 staff look after over 385,000 customers with around 745,000 policies.

We proudly partner with Eden Park, support youth charity Blue Light, and have been consistently recognised by: Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands (since 2011), IBM Kenexa Best Workplaces Survey (since 2008), Canstar Blue Most Satisfied Customers (2013-2018), and the Colmar Brunton Corporate Reputation Index (since 2015) that recognises New Zealand's most successful companies.

AA Insurance has an A+ (Strong) Insurer Financial Strength Rating given by Standard and Poor's (Australia) Pty Ltd. For further information visit aainsurance.co.nz.



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