

## Is Boondocking Safe?

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I've noticed that people who live in metropolitan areas have more uncertainty about their personal safety when boondocking than those who live in rural areas.

I'm guessing that city dwellers feel more unsafe because boondocking away from any signs of civilization is a new and unknown experience.

It is especially so when the sun goes down and the stillness is broken only by the night sounds of skittering nocturnal animals, hooting and screeching of owls, and the howling of coyotes--and no street lights--rather than vehicle traffic, the hum of conversations, boomboxes, and TV sets, and all the other sounds that characterize an urban environment.

Boondockers for the most part are not apprehensive about camping away from the familiar trappings of civilization, even though they are often far from immediate response from law enforcement and beyond the possibility of a thief being seen by a neighbor or caught in the act. Boondockers are more likely to be anxious when visiting large urban areas where they might be threatened by gangs, muggers, and the drug trade.

I have had comments from RVers who expressed concern for their safety when boondocking outside of campgrounds but am not sure of the exact reasons. Is it a fear of wild animals, burglars entering your rig while you are gone, being attacked or robbed, illegal aliens, or another reason?

Most thieves are products of opportunity. When it is easy for them to take something--they will. Don't give them any easy opportunities. Following are some of the safeguards that veteran boondockers take to insure against the unlikely possibility of trouble:

- Most RV lockers have the same locks, which can be opened with any key with the CH751 identity. Change your locks so anyone with a key can't access your lockers.
- Close blinds and drapes when you're gone so the curious can't see what you have inside.
- If you don't have an electronic security system, you can pick up a small red LED light from Radio Shack and mount next to your entry door controlled by a switch

on the inside. When you go out, turn it on--it's power requirement is negligible. It looks like a security system is turned on. Even attach a fake security company sticker.

- Do not leave anything valuable, like a portable generator, outside if you are going to be gone long, unless it is secured with a heavy duty chain.
- Don't tell strangers you meet in town where you are camped or invite strangers to your campsite.
- Do not invite strangers inside your rig.
- Keep your valuables and electronics out of sight of curious eyes.
- If you see shady characters lingering around your camping area, move to a different location.

What are your safety concerns when boondocking?