

## **PROPERTY INSURANCE**

### *Protecting Your Summer Investment*

If your summer plans include a stay at a vacation home, time share, rental property, or home exchange, think about your insurance needs. The Idaho Department of Insurance offers these tips to help you prepare a well-planned vacation that includes insurance protection.

### *Renting a Vacation Property or Participating in a Home Exchange*

When renting a property or exchanging homes with another family, your homeowners insurance policy might extend to the property where you'll be staying. Be sure you have adequate coverage for the personal belongings you plan to bring with you.

If you have any concerns about advice you receive from an insurance agent or company regarding additional or temporary coverage, it's always a good idea to STOP before signing any paperwork or writing a check; CALL the Department; and CONFIRM that the insurance company and agent are legitimate and licensed in the state.

### *Secondary Home Insurance*

The policy on your secondary or vacation home may include additional stipulations because you only reside in the home for part of the year. Review the policy every year and keep an up-to-date home inventory in case you need to file a claim following a loss.

Even if you do not plan to spend time at your vacation home, you might consider maintaining coverage for the structure, contents and your liability in the event that someone gets injured on your property while you are not there. Talk with an insurance agent if you think you might need flood insurance or additional coverage against wind, hurricanes or earthquakes.

Homeowners insurance for a secondary home can have significantly different terms than your primary home's insurance policy. How a secondary property is used and how often it is occupied during the year determine the type of coverage.

Before purchasing a policy, make sure you completely understand the coverage terms and limitations. If you have questions about your insurance requirements, contact a Consumer Affairs Officer at the Department.

### *Additional Options for Secondary Home Policies*

Other ways to further protect a vacation home that you may want to consider include:

- General contents coverage for loss or damage to belongings permanently kept at the vacation home.
- Sewer back-up coverage or flood insurance because water damage can be even more extensive in a home when you aren't there. Flood insurance has a 30-day waiting period. For more information about flood insurance, contact the National Flood

Insurance Program at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) <<http://www.floodsmart.gov/>> or 1-888-379-9531.

- Outbuildings might have a limited amount of coverage in a secondary homeowners policy.
- Insurance companies might require homes with swimming pools to have special safety measures. An insurance company could deny coverage or cancel your policy if you do not follow the policy safety guidelines or do not inform the company that you have a pool.

### *Umbrella Policies*

If you have an umbrella policy in place to provide excess liability coverage, the policy should automatically extend to any new property you purchase or rent. Understand your coverage before making your down payment or signing a rental agreement.

### *Waterfront Vacation Homes*

The personal property coverage of your primary or secondary homeowners policy might provide limited coverage for small watercraft. A boat of any significant size will be excluded from your homeowners policy and will likely require a separate boat insurance policy.

Some important questions to answer before you head out on the water:

- Are you insured if someone other than yourself is operating your boat or personal watercraft?
- Are there legal age restrictions on who may operate the boat or personal watercraft?
- Is towing skiers or inner tubes covered by your policy?

### *Renting Your Vacation Home to Others*

If you hope to make a little extra cash this summer by renting your vacation home when you aren't there, first review your insurance policy. It may be wise to purchase additional liability, bodily injury and medical payment insurance to cover your risk when you or your family is not in the home.

Also be aware that your homeowners coverage might not extend to damage caused by a renter and/or their guests. Read the policy closely to ensure your coverage meets your expectations.

### *More Information*

If you have additional questions about your insurance considerations for summer activities, contact the Department at [www.doi.idaho.gov](http://www.doi.idaho.gov).