

E-Mail/Voice Mail Safety & Courtesy Tip

By William E. Ott

Use good e-mail etiquette, and don't turn on a "vacation" or "out of the office until" message in your e-mail system, especially if you're a member of any e-mail lists or groups. Every message sent to the list will be followed with the reply from your e-mail system. Obviously this gets to be quite annoying on busy lists like some EMS or public safety lists.

It's a good bet that no one on the list cares that you are out of the office or on vacation. However, some sticky-fingered types would love to know that you are in Maui for two weeks or at EMS Today for three days because this gives them ample time to empty your home of all your valuables.

This same safety principle applies to your office and home voice mail. Use caution in what message you leave for callers. "I'm away from my desk most of the day today, but I'll get back to you as soon as I can" is a lot better than "I'm out of town all week. I'll return calls next Monday." Remember that any information you choose to divulge in a publicly accessible medium, regardless of your good intent can be used for nefarious purposes.