

SUPPORT: HB 1211

Criminal Visual Surveillance in a Private Place or of a Private Area

Del. April Rose

Study says guests are finding hidden cameras inside rental properties, hotel rooms

By: [Austin Carter](#)

A suspected package thief in the Las Vegas valley has been arrested. Las Vegas police say a man stole more than \$4,000 worth of packages from the homeowner's front step. Well-positioned surveillance cameras showing the driveway and the vehicle helped officers track the suspect down, police say. There's a disturbing trend of hidden cameras being found in rental properties and hotel rooms, and security experts are explaining how they're getting there and what folks should do if they find one.

LAS VEGAS (KTNV) — There's a disturbing trend of hidden cameras being found in rental properties and hotel rooms, and security experts are explaining how they're getting there and what folks should do if they find one.

A vacation in paradise quickly turned south for a couple in California who took a video after finding a hidden camera inside a fake smoke detector.

"I actually came up to it and noticed that there was a hidden camera right here," says the man.

This was inside the rental property they were calling home for their getaway, and unfortunately these kind of finds are part of a disturbing trend of people finding hidden cameras inside rental properties.

"I don't ever think to check for it, kinda creepy to think about," says Amy Billeaudeaux, visitor.

A 2019 survey by IPX1031 found that 58% of participants were worried about hidden cameras inside Airbnbs, and 11% of them actually say they found a hidden camera inside an Airbnb property before.

"Look around the room, does something look out of place? Is something not looking like it should be in that room," says Adam Coughran.

Coughran spent nearly 20 years as a police officer in Orange County, California assigned to the tourist orientated policing unit, which focuses on crime around the Disneyland area.

He says hidden cameras are an emerging trend, not only in rental properties but in hotel rooms too. And they are not placed there by the hotels.

"Hotels are primarily concerned with cameras in the big public areas, the lobbies, play or recreation area," says Coughran. "To find cameras inside a hotel room is not common practice."

The cameras could be hidden in nearly anything from smoke detectors to lights, even fans. It's no doubt unsettling.

But what laws protect you if one is found?

Coughran says it can be a bit of a gray area when it comes to the laws.

"In some states things are very cut and dry. Where they can be, where they can't be. And virtually every state has some sort of law that discloses where they are on the premises, whether interior or exterior," says Coughran.

While the laws can be dicey, Airbnb has already taken action against hosts who have had cameras on their properties.

Their rules now state: "If you're a host and you have any type of security camera or other recording device in or around a listing, even if it's not turned on or hooked up, we require that you indicate its presence in your house rules. We also require you to disclose if an active recording is taking place. If a host discloses the device after booking, Airbnb will allow the guest to cancel the reservation and receive a refund."

For those we spoke to staying in one of the 150,000 hotel rooms in Las Vegas, some say they'll think twice.

"I think it's something you need to keep your eye out for, for sure, because someone is watching you on the other end," says Carlisa Singleton, visitor.

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