

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

September 2012

Hardening the Target

Prevent the theft of your cellphone

Occurrences of cell phone theft have been steadily increasing throughout Los Angeles County and the nation. Los Angeles County Sheriff's detectives and the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center offer the following cellphone safety tips to help you reduce the cost, risks and hassle of having your cellphone stolen:

Password protect your phone

Use the security lock code, or PIN feature, to lock your phone. This makes it more difficult for others to access your personal information if your phone is stolen.

Save your serial number

Save your cell phone's serial number, model and make in a place where you can find it. Your serial number proves that the phone is yours.

Don't store secrets

Consider carefully what informa-

tion you store in your phone. If your phone is stolen, it's not difficult to extract your private information before clearing the memory and reselling the device.

Activate the tracking device

Activate the Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking system on your phone. If the device does not have a GPS tracking system, there is after-market tracking software you can buy. Tracking devices often lead to your stolen device and sometimes additional stolen property.

Don't get distracted when walking

Stay aware of your surroundings. Don't walk down the street talking on your phone or texting. This typically makes you unaware of your environment, including people nearby. It is very easy for a thief to grab your phone while you are distracted.

Hide and go eat

When eating in a restaurant (or

relaxing in a public place), don't leave your phone on the table. It's too easy for crooks to grab it and run. Put the phone away and enjoy your meal.

Don't delay

If your phone is stolen, find another phone to use and call the Cerritos Sheriff's Station at (562) 860-0044 as soon as possible.

Be a good witness

If you see the suspect, don't try to get your phone back. Try to get a description of the suspect and if he or she is driving away, note the vehicle license number, color and model, and the last known direction of travel. Write it down if you can and call the police with the information.

Anonymous tips can be made by calling "LA Crime Stoppers" at (800) 222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TI-PLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637) or visiting lacrimestoppers.org.

Home safety tips for older adults

Most older adults prefer to remain in their own homes. Treasured memories and a familiar location are hard to leave behind. Family caregivers concerned about the safety of their loved ones may encourage them to move out of their home.

The Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association (LACERA), states that the more adaptations that can be made early on with a view toward future needs, the easier life will be for everyone involved.

If seniors are not a danger to themselves or others, older adults have the right to make their own

choices and decisions. Staying at home can be a viable choice if the house is made as safe as possible. A single-level home or ground floor condominium or apartment is the best option. The following is a safety checklist when deciding whether a senior can stay at home.

Indoor checklist

- Can the older adult turn on lights without having to walk into a dark room?
- Is there access to a corded phone with larger keypad buttons?
- Are lamp, extension or phone cords out of the flow of foot traffic?
- Are passageways in the home

free from objects and clutter?

- Do carpets lie flat?
- Do small rugs and runners stay put (don't slide or roll up)?
- Can older adults reach regularly used items without climbing to get them?
- Are there working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in bedrooms and all living areas?
- Can a light be left on at night between the bed and a bathroom?
- Does the shower or tub have a non-skid surface, such as a mat, decals or abrasive strips? Is there a sturdy grab bar available and not

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Monthly Crime Summary: August 2012

Cerritos Sheriff's Station personnel investigated 116 Part I felony crimes in August, up from 101 in July. Robberies and residential burglaries increased while vehicle burglaries and vehicle thefts declined. At the end of August, patrol personnel were handling a weekly average of 270 calls for service.

Robberies

Nine robberies were logged in August, up from an adjusted total of seven in July.

On Sunday, August 5 at 10:45 a.m., a knife-wielding male suspect robbed a male victim of a cell phone and vehicle in the 16300 block of Stony Grove Lane. The suspect was later arrested and charged with multiple counts of carjacking and robbery in Cerritos and adjacent cities.

On Tuesday, August 7 at 3:45 a.m. a male victim was approached in the 12500 block of Fallcreek Lane by a male suspect with a handgun. The victim relinquished his cell phone.

At 10:05 p.m. that evening two males were getting into a vehicle in the Los Cerritos Center when a gun-wielding male suspect took their cell phones, wallets and vehicle. The suspect was subsequently arrested.

At 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday, August 15 a male was approached by a male suspect at Cedarcrest Drive

and Norwalk Boulevard. The suspect asked to use the victim's cell phone and kept it.

At 5:56 p.m. on Thursday, August 16, a shoplifter fought with loss prevention personnel at a retail store in the Cerritos Towne Center. The female suspect fled.

On Friday, August 17 at 3:02 a.m. a male suspect grabbed the purse of a female victim in the 18900 block of Rochelle Avenue and threw her to the ground.

The next case occurred in a fast-food restaurant at 10:20 p.m. on Friday, August 17 in the 11300 block of 183rd Street. A male suspect armed with a knife robbed employees of cash.

On Monday, August 27 at 10:48 a.m. a male suspect entered a fast-food establishment in the 11800 block of South Street and simulated a weapon. When told that the employees did not have any money, the suspect fled.

Later that day at 2:35 p.m. a woman pulled into a driveway in the 11000 block of Bingham Street. A male suspect wielding a handgun pointed it at the victim and demanded her cash. She began to sound the horn of the vehicle and the suspect fled.

Residential Burglaries

Thirty-nine residential burglaries were recorded in August, up

from nine in July. Twenty-two of the August entries were made via an open/unlocked door or window. In addition, 11 windows or sliding glass doors were pried open, four windows were shattered and two doors were kicked in. Reported items missing included cash, jewelry, TVs, handguns, a safe, an air conditioner unit, laptop computers and purses. The 2012 weekly average in residential burglaries is 4.7.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries dropped from 39 in July to 25 in August. Twenty-three of the August crimes occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots, and 17 of the targeted vehicles were SUVs. High-end car stereo systems were taken in five cases and GPS units in three. Additional stolen property consisted of third-row seats from SUVs, laptops, purses, ID, knives, cash, tools, shoes, clothing, backpacks and cosmetics. The new 2012 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is 7.5.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts also declined from 14 in July to 10 in August. Nine of the vehicles were stolen from high-volume commercial parking lots. Three SUVs, two Hondas and a Toyota were among the stolen vehicles. Commercial trucks were also taken. The new 2012 weekly average in vehicle thefts is 3.2.

Home safety tips for older adults

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just a towel rack? Consider a bath chair for added shower safety.

- Does the bathroom floor have a non-slip surface?
- Install a raised toilet seat with grab bars and a handheld shower hose if needed.
- Is the hot water temperature set at 120 degrees or lower?
- Is the older adult able to get on and off the toilet easily?

Outdoor checklist

- Do all entrances to the home have outdoor lights?

- Are walkways to the entry free from cracks and holes?
- Do all stairs have sturdy handrails on both sides that run the full length of the stairs?
- Are all of the steps in good repair (not loose, broken, missing, or worn in places)?

Throughout the home

- If there are steps, are they in good condition?
- Is there an emergency exit plan in case of fire?
- Are emergency phone numbers

listed near the phone? It is also recommended that the list be placed on the refrigerator.

Adapting a home for an older adult who is struggling with decreasing capabilities and mobility does not have to be a dilemma. By observing these checklist items, you can ensure that a senior's home stays safe.

For additional information on enhancing the safety and wellness of seniors, call the Cerritos Senior Center at (562) 916-8550.

Safety Contacts:
Community Safety Division -
(562) 916-1266
Sheriff's Station - (562) 860-0044



To join Cerritos Neighborhood Watch, call the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center at (562) 916-1266.