

Cerritos

Neighborhood

Watch Report

March 2005

Hardening the  **Target**

Beware of e-mail scams related to tsunami disaster in Asia

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center has received many inquiries into possible scams related to the recent tsunami in Asia.

Complaints submitted to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center have identified several schemes involving e-mail solicitations and on-line scams.

Among these schemes are e-mails that are being sent offering to assist in locating loved ones who may be missing as a result of the tsunami, but charging a fee to do so. A fraudulent relief donation web site has also been detected that can infect a user's computer with a virus if it is accessed.

The FBI is cautioning citizens against participating in either of these types of on-line correspondence or activities. Consistent with previous advice the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community

Safety Center has offered regarding incidents of phishing, spoofing and identity theft, when considering on-line options for providing funding to the relief effort, consumers should do the following:

- Do not respond to any unsolicited incoming e-mails (spam).
- Be skeptical of individuals claiming to be surviving victims or foreign government officials asking for help in placing large sums of money in overseas bank accounts.
- To ensure that contributions to U.S. based non-profit organizations are used for intended purposes, go directly to recognized charities' and aid organizations' web sites as opposed to clicking on a link provided by a third party. A list of organizations providing assistance to the tsunami relief

efforts is available on the USAID government web site at www.usaid.gov.

- Attempt to verify the legitimacy of non-profit organizations by utilizing various Internet based resources, which may assist in confirming the existence of the organization as well as its non-profit status.
- Be leery of e-mails that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files, as the files may contain viruses. Only open attachments from known senders.

Several variations of this scam are currently in circulation. Anyone that has received an e-mail referencing the above information or anyone who may have been a victim of this or a similar incident should notify the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center via their web site at www.ic3.gov.

Host a Neighborhood Watch meeting

If you are interested in hosting a Neighborhood Watch meeting and would like to request a speaker on crime prevention and safety, please contact the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center at (562) 916-1266.

For additional crime prevention and safety tips, please visit our web site at www.safercerritos.com.

Volunteers on Patrol wanted

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station is seeking Volunteers on Patrol (VOPs). Patrolling in distinctly marked vehicles, VOPs assist with crime suppression in the city, handle traffic control, vacation checks, special events and park security checks. They serve as additional "eyes and ears" for the Sheriff's Department, and also train as first responders in the event of a major emergency or disaster.

If you are interested in helping Cerritos maintain its reputation as a safe place to live and work, and would like to provide an important service to your fellow residents, we encourage you to consider this valuable service to your community.

For more information, call the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center at (562) 916-1266, or visit the Cerritos Sheriff's Station to obtain an application.

Monthly Crime Summary: February 2005

There were 87 Part I felony crimes reported to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station in February. This is down from 117 crimes reported in January. The 2005 weekly average in calls for service at the end of the month was 337.

Robberies

There were 12 robbery-related incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in February. This is the same number investigated in January.

The first incident occurred on Saturday, February 5 at 1:20 a.m., when two suspects approached a teen in the 19500 block of Star Circle. A handgun was produced and the victim was robbed of cash and a cell phone.

The next incident occurred at 10:15 p.m. that same evening. A female driver was waiting at a red light at the intersection of Carmenita Road and the 91 Freeway when a male suspect, in an apparent carjacking attempt, opened her unlocked car door and grabbed her shoulder. The victim accelerated and the suspect released his grasp from her shoulder.

On Thursday, February 10 at 3 p.m., two male suspects approached a student in the high school lot on Artesia Boulevard near Studebaker Road and took his MP3 player by physical force.

At 11 a.m. the following day, two suspects entered a retail store in the 11800 block of Del Amo Boulevard. One suspect selected a jacket and the other struck a lone employee. The suspects fled with the jacket.

At 6 p.m. that same evening, a suspect displayed a handgun to an ATM customer at a bank in the 18700 block of Gridley Road and robbed him of the withdrawal that had just been made. The same suspect immediately walked across the street to another bank and repeated the same crime on another victim.

On Wednesday, February 16 at 6:35 p.m., a male suspect simulated a weapon near an ATM in the 18700 block of Gridley Road and demanded that a male victim withdraw cash. The victim did so and the suspect fled with the money.

On Tuesday, February 22 at 8:20 p.m., a woman was held up at gunpoint after exiting her car in the 12300 block of Edgefield Street. Her purse was taken.

At 8:10 p.m. on Wednesday, February 23, two female shoplifting suspects fought with loss prevention personnel outside of a store in the Los Cerritos Center. Both were arrested.

Two suspects were in custody after an attempted robbery occurred at 8:15 p.m. on Thursday, February 24 at an ATM in the 18700 block of Gridley Road. These suspects have been linked to a series of ATM robberies including those previously described on Gridley Road, as well as in surrounding communities.

Three teenaged suspects used physical force to take another teenager's cell phone on Sunday, February 27 at 2:10 a.m. This crime occurred near Beach Street and Stowers Avenue.

The final robbery case was reported later that same day at 1 p.m. and involved two shoplifting suspects at a store in the 10900 block of Alondra Boulevard. Both suspects fled after struggling with store employees.

Residential Burglaries

There were 17 residential burglaries reported to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station in February. There were 41 residential burglaries reported the previous month. The 2005 weekly average in this category is 6.6.

Only four cases in February involved open/unlocked doors or windows. Prying open a sliding glass door or window was the predominant method of entry into a

residence last month.

Property reported stolen included jewelry, cash, credit cards, cell phones, personal computers, sinks, toilets (from a home under construction), personal identification, handguns, clothing, tools and video games.

Vehicle Burglaries

Deputies investigated 47 vehicle burglaries in February. There was an adjusted total of 45 vehicle burglaries in January. The 2005 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is 10.

Thirty-four of these cases occurred in commercial parking lots. Twenty-two involved an SUV, pickup truck or van.

Breaking windows continues to be the most frequently reported method of entering vehicles. Losses reported included laptop computers, cell phones, cash, social security cards, checkbooks, tools, gym bags, credit cards, a backpack, CDs, stereo components, identification, briefcases, CDs and a guitar.

Vehicle Thefts

There were 16 vehicle thefts reported in February, down from an adjusted figure of 20 in January. There have been an average of 4.6 vehicles stolen each week so far in 2005.

Thefts in February varied in the makes and models involved, with the exception of six cases where Toyotas and Hondas were targeted. Nine incidents were located in parking lots.

Town Hall meeting planned

The next Crime Prevention Town Hall meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 23 at 7 p.m. at the Cerritos Senior Center (12340 South Street).

For more information, please call (562) 916-1266.

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



To join Cerritos Neighborhood Watch, call Community Mobilization Officer Mike Yach at (562) 916-1258.