

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

July 2007

Hardening the Target

Be cautious of wild animals in Cerritos

From time to time, wild animals such as raccoons, opossums, coyotes and skunks wander into residential areas of Cerritos. This is most common in neighborhoods located near the river channels. The animals may be dangerous and could cause some destruction. Long Beach Animal Control advises citizens not to approach wild animals and to be cautious when a wild animal is sighted.

Coyotes

California coyotes have adapted to residential neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces in urban and suburban areas, and have seemingly lost their fear of humans. This may be a result of behavioral changes that have occurred over several generations of coyotes, in localities where predator control is no longer practiced. Coyotes thrive in such areas because food, water and shelter are abundant, and coyotes living in these environments may come to associate humans with food and protection. Once attracted to suburban areas, they prey on the abundant rodents, rabbits, birds, house cats and small dogs that



If you see a coyote, stand tall, wave your arms and make a lot of noise. Teach your children the safety tips in the article above.

live in residential habitats. They also eat household garbage, pet food, and seeds and fruits of many garden and landscape plants. In some localities, this has resulted in the development of local coyote populations that seemingly ignore people, while a few coyotes have become increasingly aggressive toward humans. Some coyotes have stalked and even attacked children or adults, or have attacked pets being walked on a leash by their owners.

Cerritos residents who see a coyote in their neighborhood should attempt to frighten it away by shouting, throwing rocks, squirting it with a water hose, blowing portable air horns, or otherwise acting aggressively in order to reinforce the coyote's fear of people. Motion-sensitive lights on houses or outbuildings may also deter coyotes from approaching.

If you or your pets are approached by an aggressive or fearless coyote, consider the following tips:

- Shout in a deep voice.
- Wave your arms.
- Throw objects at the animal.
- Look the coyote directly in the eyes.
- Stand up if you are seated.
- If you are wearing a coat or vest, spread it open like a cape so that you appear larger.
- Retreat from the situation by walking slowly backward so that you do not turn your back on the coyote.

Raccoons, skunks and opossums

Raccoons, skunks and opossums are constantly in search of food as well. They have been known to "move in" to residential properties. Homeowners are en-



Discourage raccoons from "moving in" to your property by keeping trash bags inside the house or garage until trash day.

couraged to eliminate places that could become a den for wild animals. After ensuring that there is no animal present inside, residents should fill in tree cavities, cap chimneys and seal off attics.

The most effective protection from wild animal problems, including rabies, is a barrier and discouragement. Discourage wild animals from entering your property with the following tips:

- Remove any potential den from your property.
- Feed your pets indoors if possible or take the outdoor dishes and leftovers inside as soon as possible.
- Do not leave pet food outside at night.
- Keep trash cans in the garage or utility room until trash pickup day.
- Fence your garden.
- Vaccinate your pets.

Remember to report any physical contact with any wild animals to the Long Beach Animal Control (LBAC). For more information, contact the LBAC at (562) 570-7387.

Monthly Crime Summary: June 2007

Cerritos deputies investigated 105 Part I felony crimes in the month of June. An adjusted total of 101 were reported in May. Preliminary statistics on crime are adjusted as the month progresses when victims report late incidents or other crimes are reclassified. At the end of the month, deputies were handling an average of 325 calls for service.

Robberies

There were three robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in June, compared to an adjusted total of seven cases investigated in May. June's robbery total is the lowest month's total so far in 2007.

On Monday, June 11 at 3:20 p.m. four male juveniles robbed another juvenile of a small amount of cash in a parking lot on Artesia Boulevard near Studebaker Road.

Another case involving juveniles took place on Wednesday, June 13 at 6 p.m. when a skateboard was

taken in the 16400 block of Meadowbrook Lane.

Loss prevention personnel attempted to detain a shoplifter on Tuesday, June 26 at 4:40 p.m. outside a store in the 10800 block of Alondra Boulevard. The male juvenile suspect assaulted an employee and fled.

Residential Burglaries

Eighteen residential burglary cases were recorded in June compared to an adjusted total of nine in May. Twelve of last month's burglaries were attributed to open/unlocked doors or windows, and five were the result of pried windows. Large amounts of cash, computers, DVD players, jewelry, cameras, musical instruments and documents were taken. The 2007 weekly average in residential burglaries was three at the end of June.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglary cases dropped

from 43 in May to 20 in June. Thirteen of June's crime scenes were high-volume commercial parking lots. SUVs were the target in 11 incidents, and four victims reported stereo items taken. Other stolen property included GPS units, cell phones, wallets, purses, laptop computers, sunglasses, cameras, MP3 players, credit cards and personal ID. The 2007 weekly average in vehicle burglaries at the end of June was 6.7.

Vehicle Thefts

Thirty-one vehicle theft cases were investigated in June, up from the 25 reported in May. Twenty-two of the vehicles stolen in June were taken from high-volume commercial parking lots. Among the stolen vehicles were 10 Hondas, four Toyotas and nine SUVs. The 2007 weekly average in vehicle thefts at the end of the month was 6.6.

Attend the 24th Annual National Night Out

On Thursday, August 9, the Cerritos Sheriff's Station and the City of Cerritos will observe the 24th Annual National Night Out.

This year, in conjunction with the Concert in the Park series, members from the Sheriff's Department will present crime prevention, safety, disaster preparedness, and homeland security information at Heritage Park in Cerritos (18600 Bloomfield Avenue) from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

"Operation Kid Print" will be available for parents who wish to maintain a card of their children's fingerprints.

Learn gun safety tips

There are over 200 million guns in the United States. That's nearly one gun for every man, woman and child in the country. Regardless of your position on gun ownership, we can all agree that guns pose a life-threatening hazard if not properly secured.

There are specific laws that apply to the unsafe storage of weapons, and you can be charged with a crime for failing to secure and store a weapon properly so it can't get into the hands of a child.

Unfortunately, guns are rarely used for self-defense. A much more likely scenario is that someone in your family will be injured or killed by an accidental or intentional discharge.

The majority of recent school shootings involved shooters who found the weapon in their own home or the home of a relative.

The following gun storage and child safety tips should always be practiced:

- Store guns unloaded and locked.

- Store and lock up ammunition in a separate place.
- Use a gun safe or locked box to house guns.
- Use a trigger, cable or chamber lock to make a handgun inoperable.
- Remove all guns from the home if a member of the home is depressed, suicidal, using drugs or is violent toward family members.
- Be alert for signs of gang involvement with your children. A kid in a gang is much more likely to be exposed to guns and want a gun of their own.
- Reduce your chances of becoming a burglary victim by purchasing an alarm system or installing locking pins on sliding glass doors and windows, and deadbolt locks on solid core exterior doors.
- Remember that guns, jewelry, and cash are a primary target for burglars.

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



To join Cerritos Neighborhood
Watch, call Management
Analyst Mike Yach
at (562) 916-1258.