

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

November 2007

Hardening the Target

Safety tips for the holiday season

With the holidays just around the corner, the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center would like to offer the following tips to help holiday shoppers remain safe this season:

- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings.
- Never fight over parking spaces. It is not worth inciting someone to violence. In addition to putting your personal safety at risk, your car could also be vandalized as a result.
- Always park in a well-lighted area. Remember this even when parking in daylight. Look for landmarks and remember where you parked so that you are not roaming the parking lot looking for your car after shopping.
- Always try to walk with someone else. Robbers focus on solo shoppers.
- Carry your purse and belongings on the side of your body that is on the opposite side of traffic.
- Obtain cash during the day and never use an ATM at night.
- Never leave packages, bags, cell phones, purses or other valuable items inside the passenger compartment of your vehicle.
- Look around and under your car as you approach it. Have your keys in your hand so you can enter your vehicle and close the door quickly.
- When arriving at your vehicle, place your purse in the car first, preferably on the rear seat floorboard.
- When loading packages or children into your car, always be aware of your surroundings. Keep an eye on purses, packages and property. Be aware of anybody that approaches you from behind.
- Never buy any items from someone who approaches you in a parking lot. These items are often stolen, substandard or fake.
- Keep your purse zipped and/or your wallet pocket buttoned up. Don't hang your purse on a fitting room hook. Place it on the bench where you can see it.
- When shopping, don't put your bags on the floor to try something on or to walk around the store. Keep all bags and purses within your sight at all times.
- Don't look or act like a victim, and chances are you will not become one.

Beware of holiday scams

The holiday season is a time of increased scams. Door-to-door and telephone solicitations are common. Protect yourself during the holidays with the following tips:

- Do not provide any personal information to solicitors.
- Research an organization thoroughly before making a donation.
- Tell solicitors that you are not interested and instruct them to take you off their list.
- Report door-to-door salespersons without the appropriate permits by calling the Cerritos Sheriff's Station at (562) 860-0044.

Take precautions when using an ATM

As criminals frequently target ATMs, it is very important to be cautious when using an ATM. When visiting an ATM, keep the following tips in mind:

- Prepare deposit slips before approaching the ATM.
- Shield the ATM's keypad with your hand or body when entering your personal identification number (PIN).
- Take your receipt with you.
- When using a drive-up ATM, make sure all passenger windows are rolled up and all doors are locked.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. If you notice anything suspicious, use another ATM or return later.
- If you absolutely must use an ATM at night, consider taking someone with you. Your chances of becoming a victim are much greater if you are by yourself.

Monthly Crime Summary: October 2007

Cerritos Sheriff's Station personnel investigated 102 Part I felony crimes in October, compared to an adjusted figure of 91 in September. An increase was noted in robberies, while vehicle burglaries and vehicle thefts declined. Residential burglaries remained the same. At the end of October, patrol personnel were handling an average of 332 calls for service per week.

Robberies

There were six robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in October. Two incidents were recorded in September.

On Wednesday, October 10 at 10:20 p.m. two teen males were approached by two male suspects in the park located in the 19200 block of Studebaker Road. The suspects produced a handgun and stole wallets, cell phones and cash from the victims.

The following day, two teens forced a young boy from his bike in the 18500 of Kamstra Avenue at 7:45 a.m. The victim was able to get back on the bike and ride to school but realized that his watch was missing.

Another incident occurred after a teenage party in the 17800 block of San Gabriel Avenue on Sunday, October 14 at 2:20 a.m. The suspects and the victim had been in an earlier argument and the suspects returned

to the residence, asked for the victim by name, and robbed him of his cell phone.

On Friday, October 12 at 10:30 p.m. a man walking in a parking lot in the 11300 block of 183rd Street was approached by two male suspects. They demanded that he empty his pockets, and the suspects took the victim's cell phone.

Two teenaged suspects grabbed a cell phone from another teen on Wednesday, October 24 at 8 p.m. at the Los Cerritos Center.

As a woman pulled into her garage in the 13000 block of Hedda Lane on Saturday, October 27 at 10:16 a.m., a male suspect walked in behind her and robbed her of cash and drove away in her vehicle. This suspect was later arrested and linked to over 25 such crimes in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

Residential Burglaries

Seventeen residential burglaries were reported in October and September. Two of the October cases were considered "cat burglaries," or entries made while the home was occupied. There had been a series of cat burglaries over the past three months, but after the first week of October, no additional cases were reported. Twelve of the October burglaries were made possible by open/

unlocked doors or windows. Two windows were pried open, two side garage doors were kicked in and one window was shattered. Property reported stolen included cash, jewelry, alcoholic beverages, laptop computers, clothing, purses, keys, wallets, credit cards, DVD players, TVs and cell phones.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries dropped from 39 in September to 37 in October. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in 26 of the incidents. Twenty-four of the crimes involved SUVs and stereo items were taken in six incidents. Third-row seats from SUVs continue to be a common objective in a rising number of these crimes. Other items taken in the burglaries included GPS units, sunglasses, cameras, cash, tools, CDs, purses and briefcases.

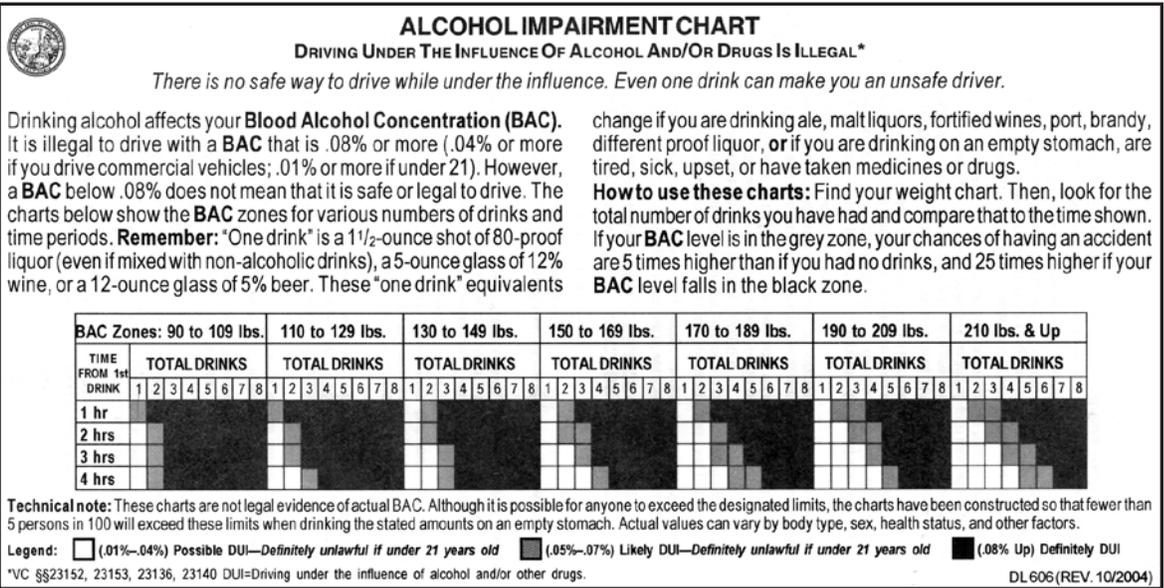
Vehicle Thefts

There were 22 vehicle thefts reported in October, down from 30 in September. Again, high-volume commercial parking lots were the venues of choice; 15 vehicles were stolen from these locations. Nine SUVs, five Hondas and two Toyotas were among the vehicles taken. The 2007 weekly average at the end of the month was 6.1.

Drive responsibly

The holiday season is one of the busiest and most dangerous times to drive. Remember that driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs is illegal.

Reference the chart on the right for blood-alcohol levels according to your weight.



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.