

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

April 2009

Hardening the Target

Local scam targets Asians

On Wednesday, March 18, 2009, a female Cerritos resident received a threatening telephone call. The caller, a Mandarin-speaking male, made reference to the murder of mafia members and said his companions required money to flee the country. He demanded \$30,000 from the victim and threatened to harm her husband and children if she did not comply. The victim is not married and has no children. On Thursday, March 19, the victim received another telephone call from the same male, however, the victim refused to speak to him.

Investigators assigned to the Los

Angeles Sheriff's Asian Gang team are actively investigating these crimes and approximately 30 other similar crimes in Southern California. This appears to be an Internet-assisted scam based outside the United States. The F.B.I. is involved in the investigation.

If you receive a similar call, and are concerned for the safety of loved ones, confirm that your loved ones are safe and contact the Cerritos Sheriff's Station at (562) 860-0044. If at all possible, check for any phone number that may be displayed on caller ID, write it down, and provide the number to law enforcement.

Town Hall Meeting set

Cerritos residents and community members are invited to attend the next Neighborhood Watch Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, May 13 at 7 p.m. at the Cerritos Senior Center at Pat Nixon Park.

Those in attendance will hear a briefing on recent crime trends in Cerritos.

The meeting is sponsored by the City's Community Safety Division and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. For more information, call (562) 916-1266. For crime prevention tips, emergency preparedness information and community safety links, visit www.safercerritos.com.

Home safety tips offered

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Division would like to remind residents of a few tips to enhance safety around the home and avoid becoming a victim of crime.

- Keep all doors and windows locked, even if you are just going out "for a minute."
- Install dead-bolt locks on all doors.
- Don't give maids, babysitters, or others working in your home access to your home keys or alarm codes.
- Re-key or change all locks when moving into a new home.
- Don't give your name, phone number or whereabouts on your answering machine message. Never say you aren't home. Just ask the caller to leave a message.

- Consider installing a home alarm system that provides monitoring for emergencies.
- Leave outside lights on after dark or have outside lights controlled by a motion detector.
- Leave drapes or blinds partially open during the day and closed at night.
- Never dress in front of windows. Always close the drapes or blinds.
- Know your neighbors and keep their phone numbers handy.
- Have a friend or neighbor check on you daily if you are home alone.
- Have government and other regular checks deposited directly in your bank.
- Call the Cerritos Sheriff's Station or 911 if you hear or see some-

thing suspicious. Don't take direct action yourself, but be the "eyes and ears" of the Sheriff's Department by providing good descriptions of people, vehicles and activities. A deputy will be dispatched to your address even if you hang up or cannot speak.

- Plan an escape route from each room in your residence to use in an emergency situation.

When returning home

- If someone drives you home, have the person wait until you are safely inside.
- Leave outside lights on if you'll return after dark.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages that obstruct your view

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A publication of the City of Cerritos and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Post Office Box 3130 • Cerritos, CA 90703 • www.safercerritos.com

Monthly Crime Summary: March 2009

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station investigated 130 Part I felony investigations in the month of March, down from 133 in February. Robberies and vehicle burglaries increased while residential burglaries and vehicle thefts decreased. Field deputies handled a weekly average of 334 calls for service in March.

Robberies

There were seven robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in March, compared to four in February.

On Sunday, March 1, at 2:00 p.m. a male suspect struggled with a female victim in a lot located in the 13300 block of South Street. Her purse was taken.

A woman was walking in a lot on South Street near Ely Avenue on Tuesday, March 3 at 8:15 p.m. when a male suspect grabbed her purse and ran. The suspect tripped on the curb, dropped the purse, and continued to run away from the victim.

A male teen relinquished his cell phone after being threatened by two other teens on Tuesday, March 10 at 3:30 p.m. near the intersection of Studebaker Road and Artesia Boulevard.

A female juvenile was robbed of her cell phone at gunpoint by two male suspects on Tuesday, March 17 at 3:05 p.m. in the 11000 block of Artesia Boulevard. The two suspects

ran to an awaiting vehicle driven by a third suspect. Two of the suspects were arrested by detectives and the third is being sought.

A male walking in a lot at the Los Cerritos Center on Tuesday, March 24 at 8:40 p.m. was approached by a gun-wielding male suspect and robbed of his vehicle.

Three suspects were arrested after robbing a male in the 11800 block of South Street on Thursday, March 26 at 1:50 a.m. The victim's property was recovered in the suspect's vehicle.

The last robbery of the month occurred at 8:45 p.m. that evening when three suspects entered a garage and robbed several people in the 13200 block of Beach Street.

Residential Burglaries

Residential burglaries dropped for the second consecutive month as six were reported in March. There were nine in February and 20 in January. Open/unlocked doors or windows were attributed to three entries. The other three cases involved pried open windows. Laptop computers, tools, jewelry, cash, a dog and a safe were among the items reported stolen. The new 2009 weekly average in residential burglaries is 2.2.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries increased to 45 in March compared to 32 in February. Twenty-nine of the cases

in March occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots. Thirty-two SUVs were burglarized. GPS units were stolen from nine vehicles, and stereo items were removed in two crimes. Purses, wallets, briefcases, cell phones, MP3 players, a Social Security card, car seats, a helmet, golf clubs and a bowling ball were among the items reported stolen. The 2009 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is now 8.8.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts dropped from 31 in February to 22 in March. Twenty vehicles were taken from high-volume commercial parking lots. Five SUVs, nine Hondas and two Toyotas were stolen. The new 2009 weekly average in vehicle thefts is 6.8.

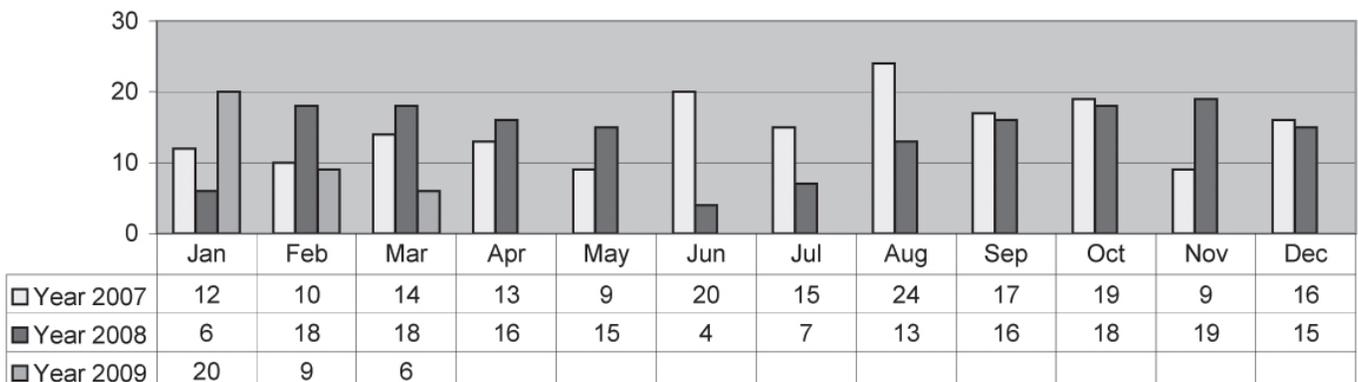
Home safety tips

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and make it difficult to react in an emergency.

- Have your key in hand so you can open the door immediately.
- Don't go in or call out if you suspect someone has broken into your home, e.g., if a window or screen is broken, a door is ajar, or a strange vehicle is parked in the driveway. Go to a neighbor's home and call the police.
- At night, keep your headlights on until you are in your garage.

Monthly residential burglaries from 2007 to present



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.