

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

December 2010

Hardening the Target

Protect yourself against financial crimes

Most crimes are crimes of opportunity, including many financial crimes. Use the following tips to protect yourself against financial crimes:

- Don't keep your personal identification number (PIN) written down and near your credit or debit card.
- Shield your hand when entering your PIN number in public.
- Sign new credit/debit cards as soon as you get them.
- Destroy old cards as soon as they expire.
- Diligently review bank statements every month. During the holidays, many people purchase additional items. Review all purchases thoroughly on your statement.
- Never give your account information over the phone to someone you don't know.
- Never provide your PIN to anyone. Your bank or issuing credit card company will never request it from you.
- Make sure your credit/debit card is returned after each use.
- Do not include your Social Security number on your checks.
- Do not write your credit card number on your checks.
- Get in the habit of inspecting to see whether any checks are missing from your checkbook or your check order.
- Immediately notify your bank if a check is missing or if checks you

ordered are not received.

Criminals who use scams for financial gain can be great con artists. If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

If you become a victim of financial crime, immediately contact your bank, the Cerritos Sheriff's Station and the three major credit reporting agencies: TransUnion, Experian and Equifax.

Prevent vehicle burglary by NEVER leaving any valuable items inside the passenger compartment of your vehicle.

If you absolutely must leave valuables in your vehicle, lock them in the trunk. However, if you own an SUV or pick-up truck, you do not have this option, and thieves know it!

Protect your serialized property

Many gifts received during the holidays have a serial number. The serial number can be stamped on a plate and attached to the item, indented in plastic or printed on a tab that sticks on an item's surface. While these numbers serve both the purchaser and manufacturer in identification for warranty issues, etc., they are also vital to law enforcement. Nationally, a system exists where property can be entered into an automated database when it is reported stolen. When a peace officer wants to confirm the status of an item bearing a serial number, that information is inputted and if it returns as a stolen, the person in possession can be arrested.

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center asks for your help in protecting your gifts or investments by being prepared to furnish these serial numbers in the event you become a victim of

property crime. Having a separate file containing a description of the item, brand name, model number and serial number will increase your chances of having that property returned to you if it is taken. It is always a good idea to update this list when a new item is received.

California law prohibits anyone from buying, selling, receiving, concealing or possessing any item on which the manufacturer's serial number, identification number or any other distinguishing number or marking has been removed, altered, defaced or covered. Depending on the value of the property, anyone convicted of this could receive up to three years in state prison as punishment. Keep this in mind during a transaction and make sure that the item and the receipt bear the same serial number of the property that you are buying.

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Monthly Crime Summary: November 2010

Cerritos Sheriff's Station personnel investigated 83 Part I felonies in November, down from an adjusted figure of 113 in October. Vehicle thefts increased slightly in November, while robberies, residential burglaries and vehicle burglaries decreased. At the end of November, patrol deputies were handling a weekly average of 297 calls for service in 2010.

Robberies

There were three robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in November, compared to five in October.

A shoplifting incident turned into a struggle after loss prevention personnel attempted to detain a male suspect on Wednesday, November 3 at 7:30 p.m. outside of a store in the 10900 block of Alondra Boulevard. The suspect was later arrested by patrol deputies at his residence after a brief but productive investigation.

At 10:22 p.m. on Sunday, November 21, two suspects entered a fast food restaurant in the 11400 block of South Street and robbed an em-

ployee of the cash register contents at knife point.

A residential burglary on Tuesday, November 23 at 2 p.m. in the 19700 block of Corby Avenue turned into a robbery when a resident interrupted two suspects inside of the home. One of the suspects pushed the victim down as the two left the residence. The driver of the getaway vehicle departed, leaving his crime partners in the neighborhood. One was arrested by arriving deputies, but the driver and second suspect managed to escape. Detectives have good investigative leads as to the identities of the outstanding suspects.

Residential Burglaries

Fifteen residential burglaries were investigated in November, down from 22 in October. Eight of the homes were accessed through open/unlocked doors or windows. In addition, three windows were shattered, three windows were pried open and one front door was kicked in. Guitars, laptop computers, jewelry, cash, TV, cameras, guns, plants

and furniture were among some of the items reported stolen. The new 2010 weekly average in residential burglaries is 2.9.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries dropped from 38 cases in October to 13 in November. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in seven cases. Eleven SUVs were targeted. GPS units were taken in two incidents and a stereo was taken in one incident. Additional stolen property included third-row seats from SUVs, credit cards, gym bags, cell phones, tools, wallets and purses. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is now 6.7.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts increased by one case over the total for October as 18 were reported in November. Seventeen of the November crimes occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots. Ten SUVs, two Hondas and two Toyotas were stolen, in addition to three motorcycles and a tractor/trailer. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle thefts remains at 4.6.

Help stop bullies

Bullies usually threaten or hurt other kids when no adults are around to see them do it. They know that if an adult did see them, the adult would stop the bully and help the victim. Instead, bullies wait until recess, between classes or the walk home to push other kids around. However, they usually do it in areas where other kids can see them. Bullies like an audience; it helps them feel powerful.

Most kids don't like watching another kid get bullied. as it can make them feel scared and powerless. When you see someone being bullied, remember the tips below and help stop a bully.

- Speak up. Tell the bully how you feel about the situation. By saying, "that's not funny, let's get out of here" or something similar, you can help stand up for another kid.
- Be a friend. When kids go somewhere without their friends, they are more likely to get picked on by a bully. If you see someone being picked on, even if you don't know the person, be a friend and ask the kid to walk with you away from the bully.
- If you see someone being bullied, get an adult. Tell the adult what is going on and ask for help.

Attend the Neighborhood Watch Town Hall Meeting

Cerritos residents and community members are invited to attend the next Neighborhood Watch Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, January 12 at 7 p.m. at the Cerritos Senior Center.

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.

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.