

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

July 2010

Hardening the Target

New Internet scam targets your banking information

A new Internet scam called “tab napping” has recently surfaced. The scam is more sophisticated than a phishing scam because it can access your information even if you don’t click on a link to a scammer’s webpage. Instead, it targets Internet users who open many tabs on their browser at the same time. The scam program will replace an inactive browser tab with a fake page set up specifically to obtain your personal data - without you even realizing it has happened.

If you have opened a new tab and visited a webpage, be aware that the page may not stay the same while you are using other tabs. Malicious code can replace the webpage you opened with a fake version that looks virtually identical to the legitimate page you originally visited.

You can guard against tab napping by keeping a close eye on the tabs you open. Make sure that the URL address in the browser is correct before you enter any login details. A fake tabbed page will have a different URL for the website you were originally viewing.

Even if you don’t open multiple tabs in your browser, always check that the URL address has an https:// at the beginning of it. This ensures that the website is secure.

Avoid distractions while driving

Vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 20, and 20 percent of fatal car accidents are caused by teen drivers. The National Safety Council has determined that many inexperienced drivers are unaware that the following factors can contribute to an accident:

- distractions
- speed
- judging stopping and merging distances
- vehicle performance
- awareness of road conditions

Drivers of any age can suffer distractions behind the wheel. Many motorists attempt to perform multiple tasks while driving, which places them and others on the road in great danger.

The Cerritos Sheriff’s Station/Community Safety Center would like to remind you that driving requires your undivided attention. Without that focus, evasive action could be delayed or even impossible. The likelihood of a catastrophic event increases with inclement weather, darkness, higher speeds, etc.

The factor that distracts drivers the most is cell phone use. An estimated three out of five drivers use cell phones or other devices to talk or text while driving. Talking or texting on a wireless phone is against the law unless you are using a hands-free device. Drivers often hold the phone in one hand which obstructs their vision on that side

of the vehicle. With only one hand free, using turn signals is frequently neglected as drivers try to maintain control of the steering wheel. Drivers have also been seen gesturing while conversing on the phone, which takes both of their hands away from the steering wheel. Cars have also been known to drift into adjacent lanes during phone calls. Many drivers become so involved in their conversations that they lose awareness of the flow of traffic and reduce their speed. This is very common on the freeway and is a significant factor leading to road rage incidents. Keep in mind that while the first cell phone violation will only cost you \$20, with each subsequent violation costing \$50, these figures are just the base fines. In California, additional fees called penalty assessments bring the first violation fee to nearly \$105 and the subsequent violation fee to nearly \$218.

Other factors that commonly distract drivers include the following:

- eating food
- paying attention to other passengers or pets in the vehicle
- changing CDs or adjusting the radio
- reading while driving
- scenery

Whether you are on a congested freeway or a rural road, driving always requires your complete attention. Avoid these common distractions to keep you and the others around you safe.

Monthly Crime Summary: June 2010

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station investigated 97 Part 1 felonies in June, down from an adjusted figure of 125 in May. All categories reported in this summary declined in June. At the end of the month, field deputies were handling a 2010 weekly average of 300 calls for service.

Robberies

There were four robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in June, compared to five in May.

On Wednesday, June 2 at 8:30 p.m. a female was walking on Droxford Street near Del Rio Place when a male suspect came up behind her and wrestled her purse away.

On Tuesday, June 22 at 3 p.m. three teens attempted to steal merchandise from a retail outlet in the Cerritos Towne Center when they were confronted by loss prevention personnel. A struggle ensued as the teens attempted to flee, and the suspects were subsequently arrested.

At South Street and Gridley Road

a male teen was accosted by three juvenile suspects at 8:10 p.m. on Wednesday, June 23. After having his cell phone stolen, the victim contacted the Cerritos Sheriff's Station from a pay phone and arriving deputies took all three suspects into custody nearby.

On Monday, June 28 at 11:05 p.m. a male was on a pay phone in the 16700 block of Norwalk Boulevard when a male suspect approached him and demanded his property. The victim jumped on his bike and fled with the suspect chasing on foot. When the victim was able to get to a safer location, Cerritos Sheriff's deputies were summoned and arrested the suspect nearby.

Residential Burglaries

There were only three residential burglaries investigated in June, down from nine in May. The homes burglarized in June were accessed through an open window, a shattered window and a window that was pried open. Computers, cash and cameras were

taken. The new 2010 weekly average in residential burglaries is 2.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries dropped from 36 in May to 29 in June. High-volume commercial parking lots were the scenes of 24 of the crimes. Twenty-one SUVs were burglarized, and seven victims reported GPS units stolen. Two stereos were taken, in addition to credit cards, cash, cameras, backpacks, CDs, shoes, MP3 players, headrests, third-row seats (from SUVs) and a stair climber. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is now 6.6.

Vehicle Thefts

Fifteen vehicle thefts were investigated in June, down from 21 in May. Eleven of the vehicles were stolen from high-volume commercial parking lots. Eight SUVs, three Hondas and three commercial trucks were stolen. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle thefts was 4.7 at the end of June.

Prevent a residential burglary and be on the lookout for "casing" burglars

Many residents open windows and doors to ventilate their homes in warm weather. However, this provides a would-be thief with the opportunity to inventory your belongings or even gain access to your home. Leaving a second-story window open is also a risk.

Be present when your garage door is open. Many thieves are capable of stealing property in a very short amount of time. People who are walking or driving by a residence can obtain items in seconds. A thief can also steal a garage door opener from your vehicle. Even worse, a burglar could enter a garage, close the door and have more than enough time to pry open the inner door to a residence while remaining hidden from the street. If you need to ventilate your garage, remain inside of the garage or in the front

yard where activities can be monitored.

If you see a suspicious individual, call the Cerritos Sheriff's Station immediately at (562) 860-0044.

A common series of events typically precedes many residential burglaries, centering on the method the criminal uses to ascertain if anyone is at home.

The easiest is to simply knock on the front door for a period of time. Burglars are known to continue knocking until they feel comfortable that the home is unoccupied. At that point, the suspect(s) usually walk along the side of the home and enter the backyard through a gate. Now they have the concealment to check windows that are open or unlocked, or force open a window or sliding glass door.

If you do open the door and are

asked about a non-existent person, asked for directions, or find a solicitor who is not wearing a uniform or some form of identification, contact the Cerritos Sheriff's Station right away. Be prepared to offer a good physical description of the visitor along with any vehicle he or she may have entered, and the direction of travel. If you do not want to answer the door, tell the visitor from behind the closed door that you cannot speak at the moment, or make some type of noise that will tell the person that the home is occupied. This could be turning up the volume on a radio or television, slamming a door or any other sound that will clearly be heard from the porch. Make sure that you watch where the person goes after leaving the porch, and if it is to the side of your home, call 911 immediately.

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.