

# Cerritos

# Neighborhood

# Watch Report

May 2010

## Hardening the Target

### Pay attention to activity in local parks

As the warmer weather approaches, attendance in our parks increases for a variety of social events and recreational activities. Many residents use or pass by these neighborhood parks on a regular basis. Although there is an extremely low number of incidents reported at local parks, many reports occur after a crime has been committed, such as vandalism or graffiti.

Members of Neighborhood Watch are the “eyes and ears” of the Sheriff’s Department. If you are in or near a Cerritos park, take a moment to carefully observe the facilities and park activities. If you notice any suspicious persons or vehicles, call the Cerritos Sheriff’s Station right away at (562) 860-0044. (Remember, using a cell phone for a 911 call will connect you with the California Highway Patrol and cause an unnecessary delay in any local response.) If you see graffiti, please call the City’s Graffiti Hotline at (562) 916-1233.

While parks are an attraction for recreation and relaxation, they are also a lure for others that are looking for a place to congregate with less-than-legal intentions. Keep in mind that the parks within the City are closed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. If you see someone in any closed park, please call the Cerritos Sheriff’s Station. Drinking alcohol or smoking is never permitted in Cerritos parks.

### If you can see it, thieves may steal it

Many people leave low-value items visible in their vehicles thinking that thieves are only interested in expensive items such as stereos and laptop computers. While most of us know that we should not leave expensive items in our cars, vehicle burglars steal more low-value items than you may realize.

Although you may not mind if someone steals your \$5 sunglasses, a smashed car window is not worth leaving items in plain sight. The following list of stolen items reported to the Cerritos Sheriff’s Station from January 1 to April 30, 2010 proves that vehicle burglars don’t always go for the expensive items.

- backpacks
- garage door openers
- grocery rewards cards
- retail gift cards
- a wireless cellphone headset
- briefcases

- a computer case
- cameras
- guitars
- amplifiers
- clothing
- duffle bags
- cosmetics bags
- display boards
- GPS units
- purses
- credit cards
- cash
- wallets
- Social Security cards
- ID
- CDs
- cell phones
- laptops
- MP3 players
- stereos
- sunglasses
- toys
- tools
- a toolbox

### Swimming pool safety saves lives

Every year, hundreds of children drown or become physically incapacitated due to injuries from swimming pool accidents. With the return of warm weather and the swimming season, the Cerritos Sheriff’s Station/Community Safety Center would like to offer the following safety tips to protect swimmers:

- Install a 6-foot-tall fence surrounding the pool that is equipped with self-latching,

- spring-activated gates.
- Never leave a child, no matter how proficient a swimmer he or she is, unattended in the water or near a pool.
- Do not rely on inflatable toys or flotation devices to protect children in the water.
- Post rules by the pool that prohibit running, pushing or dunking, and enforce them.

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# Monthly Crime Summary: April 2010

Cerritos Sheriff's Station logged 104 Part I felony investigations in April, up from 88 in March. Robberies and residential burglaries increased in April, while vehicle burglaries and vehicle thefts declined. Field deputies were handling an average of 296 calls for service per week at the end of April.

## Robberies

There were eight robbery incidents investigated by Cerritos deputies in April, compared to one in March.

On Saturday, April 3 at 9:45 a.m. two male suspects assaulted a lone male victim inside the Los Cerritos Center and took his cell phone, keys and purse.

A shoplifting suspect struggled with loss prevention personnel at a retail store in the 12700 block of Towne Center Drive at 2:35 p.m. the same day. He was eventually taken into custody.

On Thursday, April 8 at 1:40 p.m. a female victim was sitting on a bus bench on Carmenita Road at Beach Street when a vehicle pulled up and the passenger displayed a handgun. The victim relinquished her purse and cell phone before the vehicle sped off.

A male teen was walking in the 18000 block of Studebaker Road on Wednesday, April 14 at 4:23 p.m.

when two other male teens approached him and demanded his property. After taking his cell phone and MP3 player, the suspects fled.

On Sunday, April 18 at 2:20 p.m. a female teen was assaulted and robbed by five female teens in the 17700 block of Center Court Drive.

Another robbery was reported on Wednesday, April 21 at 7 p.m. after a female juvenile had been walking on Norwalk Boulevard at the 91 Freeway. A male juvenile suspect grabbed her cell phone and fled to an awaiting vehicle.

A male victim exited his vehicle in the 20200 block of Bloomfield Avenue on Thursday, April 29 at 4 p.m. when a male suspect drove up beside him and displayed a handgun. A laptop computer, cell phone and cash were relinquished by the victim.

At 7:50 p.m. on Friday, April 30 a female juvenile was walking in a lot at the Los Cerritos Center when she was approached by a lone suspect on foot. He held a handgun and demanded her MP3 player. She began screaming and running. The suspect chose not to follow her and instead fled in a vehicle driven by a second suspect.

## Residential Burglaries

Fourteen residential burglaries were reported in April compared

to six in March. Open or unlocked doors and windows were the entry points in seven of the April cases. In addition, four windows were shattered and three doors or windows were pried open. Items reported stolen included safes, jewelry, DVD players, bicycles, cash and luggage. The new 2010 weekly average in residential burglaries is 2.3.

## Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries dropped from 25 in March to 20 in April. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in 12 instances and 13 SUVs were targeted. Four victims reported GPS units taken, and high-end stereo components were stolen from three vehicles. Victims reported the loss of clothing, tools, cameras, cell phones, laptop computers, credit cards, wallets, vehicle registration, MP3 players, cash, and third-row seats from SUVs. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is now 6.3.

## Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts also dropped in April from 20 in March to 17. Thirteen of the vehicles were stolen from high-volume commercial parking lots. Eight SUVs and four Hondas were among the stolen vehicles. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle thefts was 4.9 at the end of April.

## Swimming pool safety saves lives

*Continued from the other side*

- Do not allow anyone to dive head first into the shallow end of the pool. Doing so can result in paralyzing injuries or drowning.
- Store pool chemicals in a secure, ventilated area, away from the reach of children.
- Install a phone or keep a cordless or cell phone poolside.
- Mount basic lifesaving equipment such as a pole, rope and personal flotation devices by the pool and know how to use them.
- If your pool cleaning and/or maintenance is done by a contracted pool cleaner, make sure that the gate/fence perimeter is secure after they leave.



*Do not rely on inflatable toys or flotation devices to protect children in the water.*

**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.