

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

January 2011

Hardening the Target

Equip your home with a carbon monoxide detector

Carbon monoxide poisoning is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America. The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Division urges you to consider the safety benefits of purchasing a carbon monoxide detector.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, tasteless, invisible gas that results from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, such as wood, gasoline, propane, natural gas and oil.

Low levels of carbon monoxide are present in the air. Inside, the gas is formed from incomplete combustion from any flame-fueled device, including ranges, ovens, clothes dryers, fireplaces, space heaters, vehicles, and improperly ventilated furnaces and water heaters. Open flames from ovens and ranges are the most common sources of the gas, while vehicles are the most common cause of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center urges residents to never use ovens, ranges or portable outdoor barbecues to heat their homes. These appliances are not meant for heating.

Have your heating system (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually. The Southern California Gas Company offers this service for free.

For more home appliance safety information, please visit the Southern California Gas Company website at <http://www.socalgas.com/safety/appliance.html>, or the United States

Consumer Product Safety Commission website at <http://www.cpsc.gov>.

Carbon monoxide detectors trigger an alarm based on an accumulation of carbon monoxide over time. The detectors require a continuous power supply, so if the power cuts off, the alarm becomes ineffective. However, models are available that offer backup battery power.

Carbon monoxide interferes with the oxygen transport and gas exchange abilities of red blood cells, therefore starving the body of oxygen. Low levels of poisoning cause flu or cold-like symptoms, while higher levels of exposure lead to dizziness, mental confusion, severe headaches, nausea and fainting on mild exertion. Ultimately, carbon monoxide poisoning can result in unconsciousness, brain damage and death.

Detectors should be placed on a wall about five feet above the floor or on the ceiling. Do not place the detector right next to or over a fireplace or flame-producing appliance.

Stop unsolicited telemarketing, mail and e-mail

Are you annoyed with the multitude of "pre-screened" credit card offers? Is your dinner often interrupted by telemarketing calls? Are you tired of having a long list of junk messages in your e-mail inbox? Although there's no sure-fire way to completely eliminate unsolicited mailings, calls and e-mails, the following tips can help you reduce the amount.

Keep the detector out of the way of pets and children. Each floor of a house needs a separate detector. A single carbon monoxide detector should be placed near your sleeping area. Make certain the alarm is loud enough to wake you up.

Don't ignore the alarm! It is intended to go off before you experience symptoms. Silence the alarm, take your family outside, and ask whether anyone is experiencing any of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. If anyone is experiencing symptoms, call 911. If no one has symptoms, ventilate the building, identify and remedy the source of the carbon monoxide before returning inside, and have appliances or chimneys checked by a professional as soon as possible.

Be aware that the average life span of many carbon monoxide detectors is three to five years. The "test" feature on many detectors checks the functioning of the alarm and not the status of the detector.

If you are tired of the "pre-screened" credit card offers that arrive in the mail, visit www.optoutpre-screen.com to remove yourself from these lists, which are affiliated with the three credit reporting agencies. In less than one minute, you can remove yourself from such credit card mailers for five years. Mailing a paper

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Monthly Crime Summary: December 2010

Cerritos Sheriff's Station reported that 121 Part I felony crimes were investigated in December, up from 83 in November. Residential and vehicle burglaries, along with vehicle thefts increased in November, while robberies dropped. The final weekly average in calls for service that were handled by patrol deputies in 2010 was 297.

Robberies

There were two robberies investigated by Cerritos deputies in December, down from three in November.

Two male juveniles took a cell phone from another male juvenile victim on Wednesday, December 15 at 6:15 p.m. while the victim stood in a parking lot in the 10700 block of South Street.

A male suspect entered a retail store in the Towne Center and stole two laptop computers on Friday, December 31 at 5:35 p.m. The suspect fled the business from an emergency exit and was followed by loss prevention personnel. As the suspect began loading the laptops into a waiting car,

the driver exited, displayed a handgun, and threatened employees into retreating. A latent fingerprint was lifted in the store and an ensuing investigation by Cerritos detectives resulted in the arrest of the primary suspect and a search warrant for his residence. Property and evidence were recovered after the suspect was arrested. Detectives have sound leads on the second suspect.

Residential Burglaries

There were 22 residential burglaries recorded in December, up from 15 in November. Open/unlocked doors or windows were used to gain entry into 10 homes. In addition, six windows were shattered and four windows were pried open. Two victims reported their remote control garage door openers were taken from vehicles parked in the driveway and used to gain access to the garage, and in turn, the residence. MP3 players, tools, gifts, laptop computers, bicycles, jewelry, cash and a hose were among the items reported stolen. The final 2010 weekly aver-

age in residential burglaries was 3.1.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries increased from 13 crimes in November to 34 in December. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in 24 of the December incidents. Twenty-six of the burglaries involved SUVs. Four vehicles had stereos removed and one GPS unit was stolen. Other property reported stolen included handguns, cameras, gifts, shirts, third-row seats from SUVs, ID, purses, wallets, sunglasses, cell phones, cash and a clarinet. The final 2010 weekly average in vehicle burglaries was 6.8.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts increased by one case over the total for November as 19 were reported in December. Seventeen of the December crimes occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots. Nine SUVs, four Hondas and a Toyota were stolen, in addition to motorcycles and a tractor/trailer. The 2010 weekly average in vehicle thefts ended at 4.5.

Stop unsolicited telemarketing, mail and e-mail

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form (downloadable from the site) will get you permanently off the list.

To remove yourself from direct mail or e-mail lists that are typically sold to on-line brokers, visit www.dmchoice.org. The site allows you to easily decide which publications, if any, you would like to receive. For direct mail, consumers can choose whether to receive the following: credit offers, catalogs, magazine offers and other mail offers. For each of the four categories, you can choose whether or not you want to receive mail from companies one at a time. You can also choose to stop receiving mail for all companies you haven't purchased from or donated to within an entire category. Any

choices you make will be effective for five years.

If you receive a spam e-mail that you think is deceptive, forward the message in its entirety to spam@uce.gov. The FTC uses the spam stored in this database to pursue law enforcement actions against people who send deceptive e-mail.

To avoid dinner-time or "anytime" telemarketers, visit www.donotcall.gov to register for the National "Do Not Call" list.

Cell phone numbers are not being released to telemarketers, and it is currently unnecessary to register them on the list. Report cell phone telemarketing calls on the "Do Not Call" website listed above.

Monitor your credit card and bank records

When checking your credit card and bank statements, pay particular attention to each recorded transaction and make sure that the information is correct. With the flurry of activity during the recent holidays, it may be easier to miss something that could reveal unauthorized use.

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center recommends that you scrutinize your bills each month or each time you access an account on-line. Remember that an annual credit report can be obtained for free. This is yet another method to spot unauthorized activities in time to fix your credit rating.

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.