

Cerritos Neighborhood Watch Report

September 2011

Hardening the Target

Back to school traffic safety tips offered

With another school year starting, the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center would like to offer the following tips to help make our school zones safer and improve traffic safety.

With school in session, there is significantly more traffic. Pedestrians, bicyclists, buses and parents all contribute to school zone congestion. Most schools in Cerritos and other Southern California cities are faced with traffic issues such as double parking, speeding, unsafe U-turns, jaywalking and more.

In addition, children do not always follow the rules of the road. Oftentimes they enter the street from between two cars, attempt to get their bikes through an intersection before the light turns red or skateboard into traffic.

Please remember to exercise a heightened awareness in and around a school zone. Potential hazards are much easier to perceive if you are driving at or below the school zone speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Special attention must also be paid to buses displaying flashing red lights and a pop-out stop sign on an undivided roadway. In these instances, you are required by the California Vehicle Code to stop and wait until the flashing red lights are turned off before passing a bus.

Parents who allow their children to ride bicycles to school should keep in mind that a helmet is required for those under the age of 18. In addition,

children riding bicycles must travel with the flow of traffic. When considering whether to allow your child to ride a bike to school, also think about the effect that a bulky backpack may have on your child's balance while he or she is riding a bike.

Follow these simple suggestions to help make our school zones safer for everyone:

- Don't speed.
- Don't impede traffic by dropping children off in the middle of the street.
- Don't double park.
- Don't block intersections or driveways with your vehicle.
- Don't make illegal U-turns.
- Always make sure that your children are wearing seatbelts when they are in the car.

Make sure that your child has adequate supervision if he or she arrives home before you do. While this may be difficult for some, any form of organized activity, or the immediate availability of a trusted adult, can provide the necessary guidance to help ensure your child's safety and also give you peace of mind.

Remember, twice each school day for a period of approximately 30 minutes, the areas around our schools become very congested. If you don't have a reason to be in those areas and can avoid these school zones by taking alternate routes, we encourage you to do so.

Home safety tips for older adults

Most older adults prefer to remain in their own homes. Treasured memories and a familiar location are hard to leave behind. Family caregivers concerned about the safety of their loved ones may encourage them to move out of their home.

The Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association (LACERA), states that the more adaptations that can be made early on with a view toward future needs, the easier life will be for everyone involved.

If seniors are not a danger to themselves or others, older adults have the right to make their own choices and decisions. Staying at home can be a viable choice if the house is made as safe as possible. A single-level home or ground floor condominium or apartment is the best option. The following is a safety checklist when deciding whether a senior can stay at home.

Indoor checklist

- Can the older adult turn on lights without having to walk into a dark room?
- Is there access to a corded phone with larger keypad buttons?
- Are lamp, extension or phone cords out of the flow of foot traffic?
- Are passageways in the home free from objects and clutter?
- Do carpets lie flat?
- Do small rugs and runners stay put (don't slide or roll up)?
- Can older adults reach regularly

Continued on the other side

Monthly Crime Summary: August 2011

Part I felony crime investigations conducted by members of the Cerritos Sheriff's Station dropped from 105 in July to 88 in August. Increases were noted in robberies and residential burglaries, while vehicle burglaries and vehicle thefts declined. At the end of August, deputies were handling a 2011 weekly average of 273 calls for service.

Robberies

There were three robberies investigated by Cerritos deputies in August, compared to two in July.

On Wednesday, August 3 at approximately 10:35 p.m. a male juvenile suspect confronted a group of male juveniles in the 13600 block of Acoro Street, pulled up his shirt to show he had a firearm in his waistband, and demanded property. After obtaining a wallet, the suspect fled on foot. His mother later accompanied him to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station where he turned himself in.

A female victim was robbed at gunpoint by a lone suspect on Fri-

day, August 12 at 8:25 p.m. while in a lot in the 11800 block of Del Amo Boulevard. Her purse, rings, watch and shoes were taken.

A male victim was working in an office in the 11300 block of 183rd Street on Tuesday, August 16 at 1 p.m. and reported that a male suspect entered his office, struck him and stole his wallet.

Residential Burglaries

Residential burglaries rose from 14 in July to 19 in August. One entry was made through a smashed window, three were attributed to doors that had been kicked in, and seven homes were accessed through pried doors or windows. As is usually the case, the majority of the burglaries (eight) were made possible by open/unlocked doors or windows. Property taken in August included jewelry, laptop computers, cash, CDs, ceramic figures, credit cards, TVs, purses and handguns. The new 2011 weekly average in residential burglaries was 3.7 at the end of August.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries reported in August totaled 35 compared to 39 in July. Twenty-five of the August crimes occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots. Twenty of the burglarized vehicles were SUVs, three crimes targeted GPS units, and in-dash stereo items from GMC SUVs were taken in two cases. Other items missing were third-row seats from SUVs, folding chairs, CDs, tools, backpacks, MP3 players, cameras, strollers, purses, wallets, cell phones and a guitar. The new 2011 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is 6.4.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts dropped from 21 in July to six in August. All six cases occurred in high-volume-commercial parking lots. Three were SUVs, and for the first time in memory, none of the stolen vehicles were Toyota or Honda products. The new 2011 weekly average in vehicle thefts remained at 2.7.

Home safety tips for older adults

Continued from the other side

used items without climbing to get them?

- Are there working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in bedrooms and all living areas?
- Can a light be left on at night between the bed and a bathroom?
- Does the shower or tub have a non-skid surface, such as a mat, decals or abrasive strips? Is there a sturdy grab bar available and not just a towel rack? Consider a bath chair for added shower safety.
- Does the bathroom floor have a non-slip surface?
- Install a raised toilet seat with grab bars and a handheld shower hose if needed.
- Is the hot water temperature set at 120 degrees or lower?
- Is the older adult able to get on and off the toilet easily?

Outdoor checklist

- Do all entrances to the home have outdoor lights?
- Are walkways to the entry free from cracks and holes?
- Do all stairs have sturdy handrails on both sides that run the full length of the stairs?
- Are all of the steps in good repair (not loose, broken, missing, or worn in places)?

Throughout the home

- If there are steps, are they in good condition?
- Is there an emergency exit plan in case of fire?
- Are emergency phone numbers listed near the phone? It is also recommended that the list be placed on the refrigerator.

Adapting a home for an older adult who is struggling with decreas-

ing capabilities and mobility does not have to be a dilemma. By observing these checklist items, you can ensure that a senior's home stays safe.

For additional information on enhancing the safety and wellness of seniors, call the Cerritos Senior Center at (562) 916-8550.

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!

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.