

Cerritos

Neighborhood

Watch Report

August 2012

Hardening the Target

Prevent a residential burglary

In a common residential burglary scenario, a burglar begins knocking at the front door while the resident is inside. The resident chooses not to answer, causing the burglar to continue knocking for a few more moments. The suspect then pries open a side garage door. After entering the home, the suspect meets face-to-face with the resident and subsequently flees. In most cases, the occupant is not harmed.

The practice of knocking at a front door for a period of time is a well-known means of determining if someone is inside before proceeding to the next step of attempting entry. This form of reconnaissance or "casing" has been used on a number of occasions in Cerritos in the past few years. Exactly how often is unable to be determined as the information comes from those inside at the time of the attempted entry. There is no way to know how many completed residential burglaries started out this way.

Oftentimes residents will not answer the door to avoid what can be an uncomfortable contact with a solicitor. In other instances they may peer through the peephole and not recognize the individual. Since burglars are by nature sneaky and non-confrontational, in either case the wrong signal could have been sent and an attempt to enter could follow.

The Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center recommends that if you do not want to answer the door, that you somehow let the person know that the home

is occupied. Make a noise that you know can be heard from the front door. This could include turning on a radio or TV, shutting a door or even hitting two pans together. There is nothing wrong with approaching the door from the inside and announcing that this is not a good time for you and that you are not interested. Both of these methods just told the person knocking that the home is occupied and is therefore not a good target for a residential burglary. Make sure that you watch the activity of the person so you will know if he or she comes around to the side of the home, makes an attempt to open a gate, goes next door, etc. If the person does not go away, call 911 immediately and be prepared to provide a description of the suspect when talking to Sheriff's desk personnel. Listen to the directions given, which may include leaving the home.

If the person leaves after hearing you inside the home, we recommend that you call the business line at the Cerritos Sheriff's Station at (562) 860-0044. This allows deputies the opportunity to contact the person and confirm their legitimacy. Please note the description of the person(s), any vehicle involved, and the direction of travel.

Scan this code to view a video with additional residential burglary prevention tips.



Back to school traffic safety tips offered

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

Pedestrians, bicyclists, buses and cars all contribute to school zone congestion. Traffic issues near schools can include 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 have 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

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Monthly Crime Summary: July 2012

There were 101 Part I felony investigations conducted by Cerritos Sheriff's Station personnel in July, up from 99 in June. At the end of July, field deputies were handling a 2012 weekly average of 269 calls for service.

Robberies

Seven robberies were reported in July, compared to four in June.

A male and female suspect entered a residence in the 16700 block of Cedarwood Circle on Thursday, July 12 at 6:15 p.m. and took a laptop computer from a juvenile victim. All of the parties involved are known to detectives.

On Monday, July 16 at 5:36 p.m. a male juvenile was riding his skateboard in the 13600 block of Park Street when three male juvenile suspects confronted the victim and took his cell phone. Detectives have the suspects identified and arrests are pending.

On Wednesday, July 18 at 7:34 p.m. a male shoplifting suspect struggled with loss prevention personnel at a store in the Los Cerritos Center in an attempt to flee with numerous watches. He was subdued and arrested.

Another robbery occurred in the 12400 block of Ash Creek Road where two suspects took keys from a male victim on Sunday, July 22 at 9:45 p.m. and stole his vehicle. Both suspects were later arrested.

On Wednesday, July 25 at 12:25 p.m. a male suspect robbed a bank in the 13200 block of South Street.

At 8 a.m. on Friday, July 27, four male suspects entered a home in the 13100 block of Carolyn Street, assaulted a male resident and fled with a small amount of jewelry. Indications are that all of the parties involved are known to each other and detectives are continuing the investigation.

On Tuesday, July 31 at 10:27 a.m. a female suspect robbed a bank in the 11900 block of South Street. She was later arrested and charged with multiple bank robberies in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

Residential Burglaries

There were nine residential burglaries reported in July, down from 27 in June. Six of the cases in July were facilitated by open/unlocked doors or windows. In addition, two windows were pried open and one

was shattered. Handguns, jewelry, cameras, laptop computers and cash were among the stolen items. The 2012 weekly average in residential burglaries is 4.4.

Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries increased from 32 in June to 39 in July. Twenty-nine of the July cases occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots and 25 SUVs were burglarized. GPS units were stolen in three of the July crimes, along with two stereo systems. The most common method of entry was window smashes to retrieve visible property inside vehicles. Third-row seats from SUVs, tires, a jack, sunglasses, cameras, garage door openers, clothes, purses, wallets and cell phones were reported stolen. The new 2012 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is 7.7.

Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts increased from seven in June to 14 in July. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in 11 of the July thefts. Three SUVs, five Hondas and three Toyotas were among the stolen vehicles. The new 2012 weekly average in vehicle thefts is 3.3.

Back to school traffic safety tips offered

Continued from the other side

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 drop 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.

As a reminder, the illegal and unsafe loading and unloading of

schoolchildren from cars on to roadways near schools is subject to a citation.

As an additional reminder, Cerritos Municipal Code Section 10.12.020 states the following:

- No driver may stop, park or leave his or her vehicle for the purpose of loading or unloading passengers unless the vehicle is legally parked in accordance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including related signs and curb markings.
- No driver may stop, park or leave any vehicle in the roadway across from or adjacent to any public or private school for the purpose of loading or unload-

ing anyone attending schools in grades K-12, where in order to reach the school or grounds from the vehicle or reach the vehicle from the school or grounds, it is necessary for a pedestrian to walk across a roadway. This section is inapplicable where traffic is controlled by a traffic officer, a school crossing guard, an official traffic control sign or signal, or where there is a marked pedestrian crosswalk that the pedestrian walks on.

When transporting children to and from school, parents are encouraged to park legally and escort their children across the street at a marked crosswalk.

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.