

# Cerritos

# Neighborhood

# Watch Report

September 2013

## Hardening the Target

### California Department of Consumer Affairs offers tips to avoid scams

The California Department of Consumer Affairs offers the following tips on avoiding scams.

#### **Fight Phony “Phishers” and Other Identity Thieves**

Beware of calls you may receive from an “inspector” or “officer” with the bank who asks you to help catch a criminal by confirming your account or credit card number or by withdrawing money. Also be suspicious of an e-mail asking you to confirm your account information, even if it looks like it’s from your bank or sends you to a website that looks like your bank’s. Never give out account or password information unless you initiated the call or visited the bank’s secure website on your own. Legitimate companies will never ask for this information by phone or e-mail.

#### **Check Out Charities Before Giving**

If you receive a phone call seeking donations for a charity,

but you have never heard of the organization, it’s best to ask that information be mailed to you so you can research the charity before you decide to donate. If the caller refuses, simply hang up. Above all, don’t give out your credit card or bank account number. Be aware that these charlatans also use names similar to those of reputable charities.

To check on a charity and for tips on giving wisely, call the California Attorney General at (800) 952-5225 or visit [oag.ca.gov/charities](http://oag.ca.gov/charities). Check with your local Better Business Bureau before donating to any charity, and review its “Tips for Charitable Giving” at [bbb.org](http://bbb.org).

#### **Disconnect from Telemarketers**

If you are tired of receiving telemarketing calls, you can help stop these calls by registering your number with the National Do Not Call Registry. For more details on your

rights and how to avoid telemarketing scams, contact the Department of Consumer Affairs at (800) 952-5210 for its “Basic Facts About Telemarketing” consumer guide.

#### **Avoid Contractor Capers**

Don’t fall for scenarios in which you are falsely told that your roof needs replacing at a cost of thousands of dollars, or workers just “happen” to be in your area with some leftover paving material from “a job down the street” or someone can trim your trees for a bargain price. These scams usually result in substandard work from unlicensed contractors who disappear after they get your money. Call the Contractors State License Board at (800) 321-2752 for a copy of “What You Should Know Before Hiring a Contractor” or visit the Board’s website at [cslb.ca.gov](http://cslb.ca.gov).

#### **Bypass Bogus Sweepstakes**

If you receive a letter, e-mail or phone call implying that you’ve won a sweepstakes, be wary. Some con artists use the lure of a big sweepstakes prize to convince unsuspecting consumers to send in money to claim a “prize” they’ve won. Sometimes the con artists tell consumers they need to pay a fee to cover the taxes or service charges on their winnings. Most times the prize is non-existent. The newest version of this scam involves crooks who use names of government agencies and legitimate phone numbers to deceive consumers.

### Neighborhood Watch thrives in Cerritos

The concept of neighborhood watch has existed for a couple of centuries. Originally, townspeople would grab a lantern and walk various business districts to prevent crime. Their presence was obvious and served as a deterrent to those looking to commit crimes. Over the years, the program evolved into neighbors meeting to discuss issues, learn about crime prevention

techniques and share information that impacted their areas. Neighbors worked on maintaining an awareness of the activities that surrounded them and reporting crime as it occurred.

Today in Cerritos there are several different aspects of neighborhood watch. We have Crime Prevention Town Hall meetings where

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# Monthly Crime Summary: August 2013

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There were 98 Part I felony crime investigations conducted by members of the Cerritos Sheriff's Station in August, up from 87 in July. Robberies, vehicle burglaries and vehicle thefts increased in August while residential burglaries remained the same. Patrol deputies were handling a weekly average of 302 calls for service at the end of August.

## Robberies

There were six robberies reported in August, compared to three in July.

On Monday, August 5 at 2:22 p.m., a male victim was approached by two suspects in the area of Cedarcrest Drive and Cottonwood Drive. After producing a handgun, the suspects robbed the victim of cash, jewelry and his hat. They fled to an awaiting vehicle.

At 7 p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, a female victim fought with a male suspect as he was attempting to take her cell phone in the 17200 block of Norwalk Boulevard.

On Wednesday, August 14, a female suspect grabbed an elderly female's purse at 12:15 p.m. in the 10900 block of Alondra Boulevard.

As they struggled, the victim fell and the suspect ran away with the purse.

At 5:40 p.m. on Monday, August 19, a male shoplifting suspect was detained by loss prevention personnel at a store in the 11500 block of South Street. The suspect used pepper spray on the employees in an attempt to escape, but was ultimately taken into custody.

At 12:50 p.m. on Tuesday, August 27, a female victim was sitting at a bus stop in the 11000 block of 183rd Street when a male suspect came up behind her, grabbed her cell phone, hit her in the eye with his fist and ran west toward the 605 Freeway.

That same afternoon at 3:34 p.m. in the 19400 block of Pioneer Boulevard, a lone gunman entered the business and robbed the cashier of a small amount of cash.

## Residential Burglaries

Residential burglaries remained the same as in July with 11 logged. Six of the August entries were made via open/unlocked doors or windows. Four windows were pried open and one side garage door was

kicked in. Watches, jewelry cash, televisions, cameras, laptop computers and iPads were reported missing. The weekly average in residential burglaries for 2013 was 4.4 at the end of August.

## Vehicle Burglaries

Vehicle burglaries were up from 15 in July compared to 23 in August. High-volume commercial parking lots were the crime scenes in 15 of the cases. Seventeen involved SUVs. Stereo items were taken in five crimes and a GPS unit in one. Other items reported stolen included passports, clothing, wallets, iPads, backpacks, credit cards, laptop computers, tools, towels and a disabled person's placard. The new 2013 weekly average in vehicle burglaries is 6.5.

## Vehicle Thefts

Vehicle thefts rose by one incident compared to July with 26 investigated in August. Twenty-three of the recent crimes occurred in high-volume commercial parking lots. Fifteen were Honda products and six were SUVs. The 2013 weekly average in vehicle thefts is now 4.3.

## Neighborhood Watch thrives in Cerritos

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the Cerritos Sheriff's Station/Community Safety Center presents crime statistics, crime prevention tips and disaster preparedness information, and personnel is available to answer questions. These meetings are open to everyone.

Neighborhood Watch Block Captains serve as a liaison between the Cerritos Sheriff's Station and their respective neighborhoods. They distribute a hard copy of the monthly "Neighborhood Watch Report" and many hold periodic meetings in their neighborhoods.

Through the Safer Cerritos website located at [safercerritos.com](http://safercerritos.com), citizens can obtain a variety of crime prevention and disaster preparedness information.

Membership in the Virtual Block Club (VBC) also is available. Members receive weekly crime summaries and a map that shows the locations of certain crimes. Crime alerts are sent to those in the VBC when information needs to be made public in a timely manner.

It is important to remember that one of the most valuable components of neighborhood watch is you.

As the "eyes and ears" of law enforcement, your ability to recognize that some person or vehicle does not belong in your neighborhood, or that a situation seems suspicious, is crucial in fighting crime. Don't hesitate to report these observations to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station. Our deputies are trained and dedicated to making our community a safe place to live, work and play.

Call (562) 860-0044 to report suspicious activity and 9-1-1 for emergencies. Make sure that you program the seven digit number into your cell phone.

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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.