

April is Earthquake Preparedness Month

Last month's moderate 5.1 earthquake caused minimal damage to property or injuries to people, but it did generate an enormous amount of media attention. The continual barrage of stories sometimes seemed a bit excessive, but the importance of earthquake preparedness is critical to our safety. Unfortunately, it does tend to be largely forgotten once the shaking stops and the media move on to other news. The unfortunate reality is that many people (maybe most) are unlikely to take appropriate steps to get ready for the "big one" until after it occurs.

There are many websites with earthquake and emergency preparedness tips and information, much of it devoted to preparation. But when the shaking really starts, no one is thinking about their earthquake kits, their stored water and supplies, or their family emergency response plan (if they even have one). Given that likelihood, this month's newsletter provides some tips about what to do when you feel the ground start shaking. These tips are easy to

practice and should be memorized as they will be helpful and maybe save your life.

Public places: Drop, cover and hold on. If you are sitting in a restaurant or office building, get under a sturdy table or counter. Lights, signs and other hanging objects can fall on you. Also, get away from large windows, cabinets, or tall furniture that may fall. **DO NOT RUN OUTSIDE!** Facades and window glass falling from buildings are the first things to go flying in a major earthquake.

Indoors: Drop, cover and hold on. Take cover under a sturdy desk or table and protect your head and neck with your arms. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor against an interior wall. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances and heavy objects or glass. Again, do not run outside.

If you are in bed: Hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow, unless there is an armoire, something hanging above your bed, or nearby shelves with heavy objects. If

you have shelves with items that can go flying, get into the hallway and drop down against an interior wall.

Outdoors: Move to a clear area if you can safely do so. Avoid power lines, trees, signs, buildings (remember, things fall off), vehicles and other hazards.

Driving: Pull over to the side of the road, stop and set your parking brake. Avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signal poles, signs and trees. Stay inside your vehicle until the shaking is over. If a power line falls on your car, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.

In a stadium/theater: Stay in your seat and protect your head and neck with your arms. Do not try to leave until the shaking is over, then walk out slowly, watching for anything that could fall in an aftershock.

For more information about earthquake safety, the following websites have excellent information: espfocus.org, Ready.gov, fire.lacounty.gov, redcross.org, and earthquakecountry.org.

Monthly Crime Summary: March 2014

There were 74 felony crimes reported to the Cerritos Sheriff's Station in March, a slight increase from the 70 reported in February. Among the crimes reported were: four robberies (including two shoplifts that escalated into robberies); three aggravated assaults; 13 residential burglaries (plus two attempts); six commercial/other structure burglaries; 18 vehicle burglaries; 18 grand thefts (including three shoplifts); and 12 auto thefts (plus one attempt). For the first three months of 2014 overall Part I crime has declined by 12.29 percent over the same period last year.

Robberies

Two of the robberies occurred early in March. The first was a rare type of robbery in Cerritos and involved a female resident who was sitting in her car in her garage preparing to leave for work when a male suspect came out of the shadows, produced a handgun, and demanded her purse. He fled and is still at large. The

second robbery involved a juvenile who was strong-armed by a male juvenile who pushed him and grabbed his cell phone as he walked along Pioneer Boulevard near Gridley Park. The third robbery occurred outside the Target store on Bloomfield Avenue when a shoplift suspect fought with loss prevention officers over several packs of razor blades. He managed to escape to a waiting vehicle. The last robbery in March was also a bit of a rarity. A male suspect entered Macy's while wearing rollerblades and removed five ladies purses from a rack. He skated out the door, but apparently being somewhat new to the sport, was caught from behind by a loss prevention officer. Equally inept at the sport of boxing, he was subdued by the loss prevention officer who handed him over to responding Sheriff's deputies.

Aggravated Assaults

There were three felony assaults reported last month, two of which involved people who

were acquainted. Early in March a male suspect pushed his girlfriend's head through a glass window. He went to jail and, fortunately, there was minimal injury to his girlfriend. The second assault involved a fight between evening shift co-workers that resulted in one combatant being thrown to the ground and kicked several times. The last assault occurred on Norwalk Boulevard near Tracy High School. Several shots were fired at a group of students from a passing car. No one was struck by the flying bullets, although a parked car sustained several bullet holes. After about two weeks of intensive investigation Sheriff's gang detectives from their Headquarters Bureau have made several arrests, including the shooter, and recovered a number of weapons during the service of search warrants.

Residential Burglaries

There were 13 residential burglaries in March, plus some attempts, which is the same

Continued on other side ■ ■ ■

MONTHLY CRIME SUMMARY: March 2014

Continued from the other side

figure as the previous month (except for the attempts). As is the usual pattern, most points of entry were rear doors or windows. Other entries were made through a rear slider and through three front doors that were kicked in. One residence also had its front door pried open. It should also be noted that seven of the 13 burglaries occurred on either a Saturday or Sunday. The pattern for residential burglaries is that most are likely to occur from mid-morning to about 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Early in March the front door of a home on Martha Avenue was kicked in and cash and a laptop computer were stolen. The same M.O. was used at a residence on Destino Street resulting in the loss of jewelry. Late in the month a front door was kicked open at a home on Jeffrey Avenue, but it is unknown what, if anything, was taken. Other burglaries were investigated on Darvalle Street where \$4,420 in cash was stolen, Ashworth Place and Autumn Breeze, where jewelry was taken, and Linda Way, where two bicycles were stolen from a front porch enclosed with a wrought-iron gate that was left unlocked.

It should be noted that the solve rate for residential burglary is very low, so residents are encouraged to use safety deposit boxes for irreplaceable items, consider a burglar alarm, and get to know your neighbors. Always remember, "If You See Something, Say Something."

Commercial/Other Structure Burglaries

There were six non-residential burglaries in March, a decline from the 12 reported in February. Two of the burglaries involved a commercial storage facility on Valley View Avenue where locks were cut and golf clubs, a guitar, and a keyboard were taken. A lock was removed and a generator was taken from a storage container at a construction site on Pioneer Boulevard. A suspect pried open a window at Mary Bragg Elementary School and stole a handheld radio (several classrooms had pry marks on the windows). And recyclable items were removed from a residential storage shed on Del Rio Place.

Vehicle Burglaries

There were 18 vehicle burglaries reported in March, which continues a nice decline over the

past three months. There has been a 41 percent reduction in this category when compared to the first three months of 2013 (65 versus 111).

Six of the vehicle burglaries occurred in residential areas, and all likely occurred overnight in the early morning hours. Two cars were burglarized at the same time on Dawn Lane. The method of entry is unknown and the only loss was a cell phone charger. On two different dates and locations 3rd row seats were stolen from two GMC Yukons. One vehicle's window was shattered and it is unknown how the suspect entered the second vehicle. A single dollar bill was stolen from a Lexus on Hoffman Avenue. A passenger window was shattered on a Fiat parked on Agnes Street and a laptop and iPad were stolen.

Three vehicles were burglarized in the Home Depot/LA Fitness lot during March. A wallet and cash were stolen from a Ford Mustang, a purse and a Kindle were taken from a Ford van, and a cell phone was burgled from a GMC Yukon. The entry method on the first two is unknown, but a door lock was punched on the Yukon. A window was shattered and another wallet was stolen from a Honda Pilot at the school on Dumont Street. Wallets continued to be a popular target of thieves at Cerritos Park East where a window was shattered on a Honda Odyssey. This vehicle burglary occurred between 6 and 7 p.m., and also involved the loss of a purse and credit cards. Two vehicle burglaries occurred at the same commercial building in the 13000 block of Alondra Boulevard, where at least 10 trucks were broken into at various times and miscellaneous items were taken. GPS devices were taken from a Honda Accord that had its window shattered at an office building in the 13000 block of Artesia Boulevard, and from a Toyota Corolla with a shattered window parked at the commercial building in the 17300 block of Valley View Avenue. At about 4 p.m. on March 11, a Chevy Tahoe parked at the Towne Center had its door punched, but nothing was taken from the vehicle. Hardly anyone is ever caught for these crimes, so please remember, "Like It, Lock It, Keep It."

Grand Thefts

There were 19 grand thefts reported in March, including three shoplifts that fortunately did not become robberies. The shoplifts all

occurred in the first week of the month, one at a major retail store, one at a lingerie store, and one at a grocery store. At Walmart two men took three tablet computers and walked out of the store and fled in a pickup truck. The seemingly regular loss of ladies undergarments was reported at Victoria's Secret, and several hundred dollars of expensive liquor was taken by a shoplifter at the Ralphs on South Street.

In various other grand thefts, a pickup truck's tailgate valued at \$5,000 was taken during overnight hours from a home on Alora Avenue. In similar fashion, a tailgate was stolen from a Ford pickup while parked on Briarwood Avenue. On three separate occasions, Charter Communications lost cable amplifiers from residential parkways. A catalytic converter was removed from a Toyota Sequoia on Leal Avenue (the same make of vehicle was also targeted twice the first week of April in a residential area by Cerritos College). A motorcyclist lost his saddle bags, clothing, and gloves from his bike that was parked at the Towne Center. A similar crime occurred when another motorcyclist had his bike's saddlebags and cover stolen while it was parked on Piuma Avenue. A woman at the mall lost her laptop and iPad, a man had his suitcase stolen while at a bus stop on South Street near Bloomfield Avenue, and a young man lost a backpack containing his laptop from a bus bench at 183rd Street and Bloomfield Avenue.

Vehicle Thefts

There were 12 grand theft auto reports investigated this past month (plus one attempt). Five of the thefts occurred in residential areas, and all of these during the very late evening or early morning hours. Three of the targeted vehicles were 1990 vintage Honda Accords, two were commercial trailers, a Ford F150 pickup, a Kia Sorrento, a GMC Sonoma, a Ford Fiesta, a Nissan Sentra, and a Scion were also among the vehicles reported stolen. The Home Depot lot on Alondra lost the F150, one of the old Accords was taken from the Towne Center lot, and the Nissan came up missing from the mall.

(562) 916-1266
Cerritos Community Safety Division

(562) 860-0044
Cerritos Sheriff's Station

