



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS

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West Valley Senior Lead Office (818) 374-7630

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Sergeant Randy Hoffmaster - Sergeant Chris Rowland

Maintaining Safe Neighborhoods During the State's Release of Prisoners

If you have not followed the news, you may be unaware of the State-mandated plan to reduce prison overcrowding that began October 1st. The plan will lead to the eventual release of thousands of prison inmates and shift monitoring of ex-convicts to county probation. The LAPD is reacting to the State's plan by removing 150 officers from patrol and other assignments to form Parole Liaison Units throughout the City. They will take on much of the workload in monitoring parolees by making house calls to check on whether the newly arrived offenders are in compliance with the terms of their release.

In West Valley, our community awareness and crime prevention efforts have resulted in eight continuous years of crime reduction. Now that we face this wave of parolees being released in our City, we need to redouble our efforts in reaching out to our communities to increase our Neighborhood Watch Groups, be aware of unusual activities in our communities and know what to do to keep yourself, your friends and neighbors from becoming victims of crime. First, secure your belongings by removing them from your car. Next, protect your home by securely locking all your doors and windows. Lastly, and the most neglected tip, be an observant neighbor for your neighborhood and community and notify the Police of any criminal activity. To learn more on maintaining safe neighborhoods please attend a Neighborhood Watch meeting in your neighborhood. Please contact your Senior Lead Officer in your geographical location.

Eyewitness information is the key to solving many crimes.

The following tips will assist you when reporting crime to the L.A.P.D. **Call immediately!** A five-minute delay can reduce the chance of catching criminals.

Tell the police as much as you can. No fact is too trivial. In many cases, what victims and witnesses tell the police about the criminal is what results in an arrest. You may be asked the following when reporting a crime:

- Who, What, When, and Where?
- How many suspects were there?
- Can you describe the suspect(s)?
- Can you describe their vehicle(s)?
- What was/were the license plate number(s)?
- What did they do? What did they say?
- What did they take?
- Which way did they go?

ENCINO:

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Contact Officer Trulik for information on the next Encino Neighborhood Watch Meeting.

What is suspicious?

Anything that seems even slightly "out of place" or is occurring at an unusual time of day or night could be criminal activity. The following are some obvious things to watch for:

- A stranger entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied;
- A scream heard anywhere might mean robbery or assault;
- Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices may mean stolen property;
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates, or gas from a vehicle should be reported;
- Anyone peering into parked vehicles may be looking for a vehicle to steal or for valuables left in the vehicle;
- Persons entering or leaving a place of business after hours;
- A sound of breaking glass or loud explosive noises could mean an accident, burglary or vandalism;
- Persons loitering around schools, parks and secluded areas could be sex offenders;
- Persons loitering in the neighborhood who do not live there; and
- Anyone forcing entry to, or tampering with a residence, business, or vehicle should be reported.

LAKE BALBOA:

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Contact Officer Ham or Officer Paredes for information on the next Lake Balboa Neighborhood Watch Meetings.

Things to Watch Out for That Are Not So Obvious:

Strangers and solicitors

- Verify the employment of all solicitors, meter readers and repair personnel prior to allowing them entry into your home. This can be done by obtaining the employer's number from the telephone book or by contacting directory assistance. Never take a telephone number offered by a suspicious person. Be suspicious of alleged delivery personnel with a wrong address or asking if someone lives there.

Someone carrying property

- If it's at an unusual hour, unusual place, or if the property is not wrapped as if it was just purchased.

Someone going door-to-door in your neighborhood

- Watch for a while. If after a few houses are visited, one or more persons tries a door to see if it is locked, looks into windows, or goes into a back or side yard, it could be a burglar. Call LAPD immediately; don't wait for the person to leave.

Traffic to and from a certain residence

- It is not suspicious unless it occurs on a daily basis or very regular basis, especially during late or unusual hours.

RESEDA:

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Next Neighborhood Watch Meetings – Thursday, November 10; 7:00 p.m.

Ann Kinzle Community Room located in the West Valley Community Police Station

Also Look Out For:

Any vehicle moving slowly and without lights, or following a course that appears aimless or repetitive in any location-

- Particularly in areas of schools, parks and playgrounds. Occupants may be looking for places to rob or burglarize, or they could be drug pushers or sex offenders.

Parked vehicles containing one or more persons

- If it is an unusual hour they could be lookouts for a burglary in progress.

An abandoned vehicle parked on your block

- May be a stolen vehicle.

Continuous repair operations at non-business locations

- It could mean stolen property is being stripped, repainted, or otherwise altered.

Persons making a quick change of vehicles

- May be attempting to elude the police or abandoning a stolen vehicle.
- One or more individuals walking through the neighborhood looking into automobiles or backyards.

TARZANA:

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Contact Officer Scoggins for information on the next Tarzana Neighborhood Watch Meeting.

ONCE YOU HAVE REPORTED THE CRIME, STICK WITH IT!

- It pays to prosecute. Many criminals who are arrested for property crimes are convicted. Being a witness in court is not as much trouble as you think. Some areas provide victims and witnesses with transportation, day-care services or follow-up counseling. To get the telephone number of your local victim/witness assistance center, call your community police station.

IN CONCLUSION

- The key to keeping a Neighborhood Watch group active is maintaining interest over time. By getting everyone involved you will create a feeling of pride and the atmosphere of a small community. Neighborhood Watch can easily be adapted to meet your needs, wherever you live or work.
- Active Neighborhood Watch groups can make changes, through their local officials, such as improving street lighting, increasing extra patrol and changing traffic flow patterns. Active apartment or multi-family dwelling groups can make changes by working closely with their landlords or building managers. They can work together to improve lighting and security of individual units as well as communal areas and develop new policies or practices to improve building or property security.
- Make belonging to your Neighborhood Watch group enjoyable. People will get involved and remain interested if the programs are fun as well as meaningful. Use your imagination. Schedule potluck dinners, organize clean-up campaigns or hold block parties. The possibilities are endless when neighbors unite and work together.

Please contact the Senior Lead Officer for your neighborhood today to see how you can become more involved!



Information in this newsletter was provided by www.lapdonline.org and the West Valley Senior Lead Office.