

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS

“COMMUNITY AWARENESS IS THE KEY TO CRIME PREVENTION”

Please join us for the following West Valley Area Events:

CPAB Meetings: February 14th & March 14th, 2007, West Valley Station, 7pm

**Tarzana & Encino, 10A67/10A87, Senior Lead Officer Rob Trulik
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Happy February Encino and Tarzana,

We are continuing to have high numbers of Burglary/ Theft from Motor Vehicles. There are three things necessary to make these types of crimes possible. Those three things are the opportunity, the criminal, and the desired item (target). If we all could just remove items of value in our vehicles (cash, cameras, ipods, GPS, computers, purses) from sight, lock our cars, and park in well-lit areas or in our garage, we could stop this ongoing problem.

Door to door solicitors are a problem at the moment. Magazine sellers are posing as local high school students to sell their magazines. Please verify with the schools prior to giving any money for goods or services. This also goes for charitable organizations. Do your homework. Anyone who comes to your door to solicit for anything should be viewed with suspicion. Until next month, stay safe. Call me to set up a Neighborhood Watch Meeting for your block!

**West Winnetka & Canoga Park, 10A57 Senior Lead Officer Janet Zumstein
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I hope that everybody has a very special Valentines Day. I also want to thank you for all your hard work making our community a safer place to live, work, and visit.

We are still having a problem in the vicinity of the Westfield Topanga Mall with all types of crime, especially Burglary/Theft from Motor Vehicle. Please don't be an easy target. Just because the holidays are over, doesn't mean you can let your guard down. I walked through the mall parking lots the other day and observed several vehicles with wallets, purses, large packages and other items of value in plain sight. Please don't rely on your car alarm to protect your property. Before you leave your vehicle, place all your items of value in the trunk of your car. Suspects are opportunists and they look for the easiest way to take your property. If they

don't see it, they don't know you have it. Remember the old saying: "Out of sight is out of mind".

Another important topic that has surfaced at several meetings is preventing young pregnant girls from abandoning their babies in trash dumpsters, alleys or other locations, which are harmful to the newborns safety. The State of California has developed a program in which new mothers can drop off their infant at any hospital or fire station within three days of birth, without any reprisals. It protects the baby's health and the parent from prosecution. If you know of anyone in this situation, please educate them. With your help, we can save the lives of both the young mother and the infant involved in these situations.

Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with you.

**Winnetka, 10A33 Senior Lead Officer Rachel Raigoza
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Crime Trend:

Grand Theft Auto (GTA) and Burglary/Theft from Motor Vehicle (BTFMV) are the most reported crimes in Winnetka, specifically in and around apartments and condominiums. The Winnetka area is densely populated with multi-unit apartments and condominiums with subterranean and carport-style parking lots. These parking facilities are easy targets for criminals who often look for the right opportunity. Although most of the GTA's and BTFMV's are occurring during late night and early morning hours, crime prevention remains the biggest part of the solution.

By simply taking these small steps to protect yourself and your property, you can reduce your chances of being a victim:

Always lock doors to common areas and garages.

When leaving or entering a garage, be sure the door closes and locks behind you before moving on. Do not leave the garage door opener in your car. If stolen, it provides easy access to your building.

Organize regular meetings to discuss security issues.

Contact neighbors in your complex whenever a crime occurs, so they may take appropriate precautions.

With this in mind, **West Valley Division is having an apartment owner and manager training** on Thursday, February 22, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Canoga Park Chamber of Commerce located at 7248 Owensmouth Ave.

Woodland Hills, 10A73/75, Senior Lead Officer Kip Jackson

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Gun Safety:

The National Kid Safe Campaign reports that about 90% of all unintentional shootings involving children are linked to an easily accessible loaded handgun in the home. More than half of American families keep firearms in their home.

Children should never be allowed to touch guns, not even in the presence of supervising adults.

Tell your children never to touch a gun, no matter who gives them permission.

Keep guns unloaded at all times.

Keep the gun's safety on, even when the gun is unloaded.

Keep all firearms in a locked gun safe, cupboard, closet or drawer.

Store and lock ammunition in a location separate from the firearm.

Purchase trigger locks, and put them on your guns- even if they are unloaded and locked up.

Hide the keys somewhere that your children will not look, such as an adult vitamin bottle in your medicine cabinet.

All gun owners and their children should take a gun safety course.

**Reseda Senior Lead Officers 10A27 Jodie McGee / 10A47 Brent Rygh
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We continue to see a rise in vehicle burglaries and stolen vehicles. Parking lots and parking structures along Reseda Boulevard and in the Sherman Way Corridor business district are being hit the hardest. Honda Accords and Civics along with Toyota Camrys are the car thieves vehicles of choice. West Valley Officers are making a concentrated effort to turn this crime trend around. Here are a few things you can do to prevent your vehicle from being broken into:

Always remember to lock you car doors, and keep your windows closed.

Remember to take your valuable items with you. Never leave a valuable item where it can be seen.

Park in a well-lit, well-traveled area (if at all possible).

Call the police, if you see strangers looking into your neighbors cars.

Another problem in Reseda that is increasing and causing traffic accidents is distracted drivers.

One of the major causes of distraction is the cell phone attached to everyone's ear. If you are guilty of this behavior, either pull off to the side of the road to make a call, or if you must use your cell phone while driving, check into a hands-free system for your vehicle.

**West Hills, 10A51 Senior Lead Officer Pete Vanderburgh
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While providing traffic enforcement for West Hills, I've noticed more travelers using their cell phones lately and not thinking about driving safely.

Here are a few tips to help everyone:

Ask a passenger to place the call for you, or if alone use the memory dialing function.

Pull to the curb or a safe place to make a call.

If you drive in heavy traffic (freeways) use your mailbox option to pick up all incoming calls and when you arrive at your destination, return the calls.

Please! Please! never attempt to write down information or another phone number while driving on our streets, you might hurt someone or perhaps yourself too!

Please pass this information along, it could really help someone in your community.

***Note:** We Had a slight increase in Burglary/Theft from Motor Vehicles in reporting district #1052 (bordered by Victory Blvd to Vanowen St, Lederer Ave. to Woodlake Ave). Please! remove all valuables from sight in your car when not in use on the street or driveway.

**Canoga Park, 10A3, Senior Lead Officer Alex Padron
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Greetings everyone in the Canoga Park area. I wanted to take a moment and personally thank those of you that regularly attend the neighborhood watch meeting. Your commitment to your community is greatly appreciated by all of us in law enforcement. We could not do our job effectively as law enforcement officers without your eyes and ears out there. Keep up the good work.

This is Part III in the series of burglary prevention tips. I wanted to cover burglary prevention through the use of environmental design. Environmentally designed burglary proofing of your home simple means that you use as many as possible natural features to protect your home and you from being a victim.

A dark and dirty neglected walkway **or alley** may send a signal that this is a good place to commit a crime.

Define and protect your territory in a manner that will clearly delineate your space and show that you truly care about it. Create natural opportunities for you and the police to see what's happening around your home. Keep shrubs trimmed below windows, so you can easily look out onto your property and eliminate places for criminals to hide. Consider low, thorny plants, like cactus or rose bushes, under windows that can not be seen from the street. Very few burglars will want to risk a handful of thorns as they try to break into your home.

Focus on lighting next. Good lighting is one of the most effective crime deterrents. When used properly, light discourages criminal activity, enhances natural surveillance opportunities, and reduces fear. Maintain a level of light that allows police to see as much of your yard as possible. Burglars hate to work under lights. Avoid shadows and darkened out areas where people can hide at night. Remember the object is to light up the criminals. Some do not light up their yards at night to save some money on their DWP bills. Those individuals do not consider what the cost of a home invasion or expensive burglary would amount to both financially and emotionally.