



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Devonshire Area Neighborhood Watch Newsletter



May 2011



Message from the Commanding Officer, Devonshire Area

April was Distracted Driver Awareness Month. The Los Angeles Police Department joined a statewide effort to crack down on Cell Phone Use and Texting. This was the first Distracting Driving Awareness Month hosted by the State of California. During the month of April, law enforcement agencies throughout California, along with the Los Angeles Department will have **ZERO tolerance for cell phone use and texting.** Distracting Driving is any "non-driving" activity a person engages in that has the potential to distract him/her from the primary task of driving and increases the risk of accident. There are three main types of distractions while driving: **Visual** - taking your eyes off the road, **Manual** - taking your hands off the wheel, and **Cognitive** - taking your mind off what you're doing. The California Vehicle Code violation for this infraction is 23123 (a) and it reads as follows: "A person shall not drive a motor vehicle while using a wireless telephone unless that telephone is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking, and is used in that manner while driving". 23123 (c) defines the exceptions to this law, which reads: "This section does not apply to a person using a wireless telephone for emergency purposes, including, but not limited to, an emergency call to a law enforcement agency, health care provider, fire department, or other emergency services agency or entity". Now let me clarify "hands-free" for those of you who are still unclear. **"Hands-free"** is defined as having both hands on the steering wheel **AT ALL TIMES.** If you have a listening device in your ear and you have to pick up your phone to either answer or dial someone, you are not hands-free and are in violation of this law. Hands-free systems are completely vocal and require no manipulation of the cell phone. There is a big misconception out there that driving while operating a cell phone is no big deal. On the contrary, Distracted Driving is a serious traffic safety concern and the leading factor in fatal and serious injury traffic collisions. Statistically you are four times as likely to be involved in a serious traffic collision while using a cell phone, and teenagers are four times more likely than adults to get into a car crash or near crash event directly related to talking on the cell phone or texting. For every 6 seconds of drive time, a driver sending or receiving a text message spends 4.6 of those seconds with their eyes off the road. This makes texting the most distracting of all cell phone related tasks. **Four out of every five accidents (80%) are attributed to Distracted Drivers.** Ultimately, my goal is to make the road safer for all drivers, so I'm recommending if you plan to operate your cell phone while driving, you need to invest in a hands-free system or pull over and park. If everyone works together, we can make our roads much safer.



Sean K. Kane, Captain
Commanding Officer
Devonshire Community Police Station

Basic Car Area 17A23
Senior Lead Officer Dan Del Valle
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Crime Trends and Locations - This past month we had a homicide in our area. The incident was between two friends, unfortunately mixing alcohol and guns. This was an isolated incident where a rifle was discharged fatally wounding one of them. Our area experienced an increase of Residential Burglary this past month. The area of concern for Burglary is from Lurline Avenue to Farralone Avenue and Devonshire Street to Lassen Street. **Please report suspicious activity, "don't wait for your neighbor to call!"**

Crime Tips - Unattended open garage doors are an attraction to potential thieves. Please remember to close your garage door if you are not in the immediate area. It takes only seconds for a thief to walk in and walk off with your property. Mark your valuables with your driver's license number so law enforcement can attempt to locate a victim with a number that can be referenced.

Commendable Officer and Citizen Incident - During this past month, the citizens from the surrounding area participated with a community clean-up in Porter Ranch. Sam Dobry and friends from Holmes Middle School, with the support of Councilman Greig Smith and his staff, organized the event. Awesome that 11-year old kids took on this project to improve the quality of life in their community. The event was a huge success. Thank you!!!

Neighborhood Watch Events - **S.O.L.I.D.** (Supporters of Law Enforcement in Devonshire) is having their annual **"All You Can Eat" Pancake Breakfast** at the Park across from Devonshire Station on Saturday, May 21, 2011. from 7:30 to 10:30 AM.

May 26, 2011, is the next Neighborhood Watch Meeting for Basic Car 17A23. Our meetings are held @ 7:00PM every 4th Thursday of the month at Saint John Eudes Church located at 9901 Mason Avenue.

Basic Car Area 17A35
Senior Lead Officer Dario Del Core
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Crime Trends and Locations - The Basic Car Area has been quiet in regards to violent crimes and there has been an apparent decrease in residential burglaries during the last two weeks of March. The alert being sent out to the community relates to Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicle (BTFMV) activity in three distinct areas: O'Melveny Park in Reporting District (RD) 1705, the L.A. Fitness parking lot at Devonshire Street and Reseda Boulevard in RD 1743, and the residential area in the vicinity of Petit Park in RD 1737. The most common items being taken are unattended purses being left in plain sight inside of parked vehicles.

Crime prevention information – Always be aware of Your Surroundings – No Matter Where You Are; Home, Work, or on Vacation! Conceal jewelry, money, cell phones, iPods and anything of value when in public. Don't be oblivious or distracted while on a cell phone or listening to music. Look around for strangers before entering or exiting your home, your car, or a business – anyone can be watching or waiting from a parked car or behind a bush. Never open your door to solicitors or any stranger – even those who say they are your neighbor. It's not rude to talk through the door if you need to – your safety is more important than being polite.

Neighborhood Watch Events - Basic Car 17A35 Meeting, **Thursday, May 19, 2011, 7:00PM** at **St. Euphrasia Church, 11767 Shoshone Avenue, Granada Hills.**

Basic Car Area 17A49

Senior Lead Officer Janine Angeles

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Crime Trends and Locations - From March 6 to April 2, 2011, there were three robberies, three Assaults with a Deadly Weapon (ADW), 14 Burglaries, seven Thefts, eight Grand Theft Autos (GTA) and 21 Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicles (BTFMV). Over all, 17A49's area crime has significantly decreased from the past few months. However, BTFMV has increased. Remember to remove any items from your vehicle! The majority of our crimes occurred between Balboa Boulevard and Hayvenhurst Avenue, between Devonshire Street and Chatsworth Street. Please pay attention to your environment! Do not leave items in your car!

Crime prevention information - If you are at home and you hear someone knocking on the door, do not open the door, but let the person know you are home. Most burglars do not want to break in if someone is home. If someone claims they need help, tell them you will call 9-1-1 for them. If the person claims to be from a legitimate business, ask to see their identification card through the peep hole. Some criminals will try to distract their victims by claiming they lost a cat or another type of excuse to get the victim into the back yard. While they are distracted in the backyard, another suspect enters the victim's residence and removes their property. Not every person coming to your door has bad intentions, but if you don't know them, why take the chance?

Crime Tips - Did you know if you see a crime and want to report it anonymously, you can call 800-873-7283. Your information will remain confidential.

Neighborhood Events - The **SOLID pancake breakfast** is on **May 21, 2011, from 7:30-10:30 AM.** Come to Devonshire Station and see you're Captains and Senior Lead Officers cook delicious pancakes and sausage! **All you can eat for only \$7.00!**

Neighborhood Watch Events - 17A49 Basic Car **Meeting May 24, 2011, at 7:00 PM at 10124 Balboa Blvd** (Fire Station 87).

Basic Car Area 17A67

Senior Lead Officer Ignacio Murillo

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Crime Trends and Locations - Basic Car 17A67 area is still doing well; however, the Reseda Blvd corridor is the main focus of Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicles (BTFMV). These crimes are sporadic through-out the day, with the peak times occurring during late night and early morning hours.

Crime prevention information - Summer is around the corner and many of you will be traveling out of town. Don't wait until the last minute to make sure your home is safe to be left unoccupied. Now is a good time to pay close attention to your window/door locks, residential alarm, and don't forget to make

sure your sprinklers and timers are working properly. Talk with your neighbors prior to leaving so they can keep an eye on your house. Another good idea is to give a spare key to a trusted family member or friend who lives nearby in case of an emergency.

Neighborhood Events - Basic Car 17A67 Meeting **Wednesday, April 27, 2011, at 7:00PM** at **Calahan Elementary School, 18722 Knapp Street, Northridge.** **Our guest speakers will be members of Devonshire Area Vice Unit.**

Basic Car Area 17A81

Acting Senior Lead Officer Phillip Sellars

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Crime Trends and Locations: Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicle (BTFMV) and Auto Theft continue to plague Winnetka Theaters and Northridge Mall. There's a residential burglary concern popping up in the area south of Parthenia Street to Roscoe Blvd., and Tampa Avenue west to Corbin Avenue. There is also a mid-afternoon residential burglary trend along Lassen Street from Tampa Avenue to Winnetka Avenue predominantly south of Lassen Street and east of Winnetka Avenue is on the rise.

Crime prevention Tips - Close your garage doors and lock the doors and windows to your home. I've been driving around your neighborhoods looking for Burglars and found "**Easy Pickens**" for these criminals. Garage doors are wide open and no one is in the garage, front yard, or anywhere in sight! The weather is warming up now. Try to open the garage or any other door just enough for ventilation without exposing all your hard-earned belongings.

Neighborhood Watch Events - Basic Car 17A81 Meeting **Thursday, May 19, 2011, 7:00PM, Gianelli Square at 19451 Londelius Street, Northridge.**

Basic Car Area 17A95

Senior Lead Officer Ken Cioffi

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Crime Trends and Locations - Residential burglaries within Basic Car 17A95 during the period of February 27, 2011-March 26, 2011, showed we had 11. This was a decrease from 17 last reporting period - Reporting District (RD) 1795 had three; RD's 1777, 1798, 1776 had two each; and 1768 and 1778 each had one. Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicle (BTFMV) showed we had a decrease from prior months and ended up with a total of 12. RD 1797 led the way with three; RD's 1795 and 1778 each had two; RD's 1776, 1777, 1779, and 1788 had one each.

Commendable Officers/Citizen Incidents - This month's commendable officer is Devonshire Area Detective Martin Bertsch. Detective Bertsch has been on the Los Angeles Police Department for over 24 years. Detective Bertsch is currently assigned to the Burglary table and has made several "Detective Initiated Arrests" (DIA), for residential burglary suspects throughout the North Hills community. We are so fortunate to have his dedication, expertise and commitment in the North Hills Area.

Crime Tips - Please mark valuables inside of your residence with an engraver or, bare minimum, a permanent marker. If you ever become a victim of a residential burglary, the chances of getting your property back increase dramatically. We recommend you use your driver's license number when you mark your valuables. Another good idea would be to photograph your jewelry or other items that you do not want to mark up or are too small to engrave.

Neighborhood Events - Basic Car 17A81 meeting, **Thursday, May 12, 2011 7:00 PM** at **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 17037 Plummer Street, Northridge.**