



Safety Tips for Holiday Shopping

As the holiday shopping season swings into high gear, your Neighborhood Council wishes you a safe and happy holiday season. Here are a few SAFETY TIPS to keep you and your family safe!!

Map it Out... Create a plan for the day. This will help to alleviate any potential stressors encountered throughout your shopping day.

Be Patient... Expect busy parking lots and long lines. Remember safety comes first. Enter the store safely; do not rush! Always be considerate of other shoppers.

Conceal Your Valuables and Purchases... Few things are more attractive to criminals than valuables and purchases that can be seen from outside of parked vehicles. Make sure to place valuables such as cell phones and other electronic devices under your seat or in locked compartments. Large shopping bags or boxes should be placed in the trunk whenever possible. Criminals watch for an opportunity to break in and steal the items when you return to the store or mall. Remember – Lock-it, Hide-it, Keep-it.

Protect Yourself... Women should carry their purses close to their body and men should keep their wallets in their front pocket or in a coat pocket to deter pickpockets. Also, shop in groups, if possible, and watch for loiterers near and around your vehicle.

Dress for Success... Dress comfortably, keeping in mind that as the day progresses temperatures may dip. Also consider leaving small children at home with a trusted family member or baby sitter.

Don't Be an Easy Target... Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. When returning to your car, stop, listen, and look around. Stay alert to your surroundings and have your car keys readily available before you get to your vehicle.

Obey The Laws... Drive the speed limit, stop at stop signs. Be mindful of pedestrians, especially children. Don't walk in the middle of traffic lanes or jaywalk.

Buckle Up for Safety... and please be very patient! Low-speed collisions cause injuries too!

Please refrain from texting while driving and walking! Watch out for children!

What is Neighborhood Watch and How to Participate

As we all take steps to preserve our safety and security, Neighborhood Watch, along with alarm systems and security cameras, is a key element of crime prevention. Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program that enlists the active participation of residents in cooperation with local law enforcement to reduce crime in their neighborhoods.

It involves...

- Neighbors getting to know each other, taking the time to care about each other and working together in a program of mutual assistance;
- Residents being trained to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhood; and
- Crime prevention strategies, such as home security and suspicious activity identification and more.

Why Participate in a Neighborhood Watch Program?

There cannot be a law enforcement officer on every corner. Resident involvement is essential to combat crime.

- You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your neighborhood.
- By cooperating with each other and with local law enforcement, people can help fight crime in their community the most effective way—by stopping it before it begins.
- Neighbors place signs in their windows and post signs on streets to warn criminals that they are in an active crime prevention neighborhood and that “neighbors are watching out for each other.”

What Makes a Neighborhood Watch Program Work?

The key to Neighborhood Watch is community residents joining together to work with local law enforcement. These partnerships create a powerful force to carry out a successful Neighborhood Watch program. Neighborhood Watch works because citizens work as a group to:

- Take charge and decide what action is needed;
- Form liaisons with local law enforcement;
- Convince government to listen and respond to the community's needs;
- Target specific problem areas;
- Develop realistic goals;
- Monitor their progress; and
- Celebrate their success.

Starting A Neighborhood Watch Program...

Contact your LAPD Senior Lead Officer

- Westchester East of Sepulveda – SLO John (Chris) Richardson 310-622-3976, email 35362@lapd.lacity.org
- Westchester West of Sepulveda and Playa del Rey – SLO Ruben Garcia 310-622-3978, email 33236@lapd.lacity.org
- Playa Vista – SLO Gregg Jacobus 310-622-3971, email 35362@lapd.lacity.org

Your Senior Lead Officer can help you organize your initial meeting and will be happy to attend.

Organizing your Neighborhood Watch

- Ask about crime conditions in your neighborhood.
- Talk to your neighbors.
- Canvass your neighborhood for interest.
- Discuss any crime problems in your area.
- Arrange a date, time and place for the first meeting.
- Select a time that is convenient for most neighbors.
- Meet in the home of a neighbor or a local community center to foster an informal, comfortable atmosphere.
- Publicize your meeting at least one week in advance with door-to-door fliers and follow-up with phone calls the day before.
- Select a block captain.
- Be a spokesperson for the group.
- Serve as the liaison between law enforcement and your Neighborhood Watch group to organize and arrange Neighborhood Watch meetings.
- Recruit neighbors to share the responsibility of hosting meetings.
- Maintain a list of all members.
- Have a Neighborhood Watch meeting.
- Encourage each member to participate.
- Keep the process moving.
- Develop an action plan and activities.
- Ask someone to record the group's discussion.
- Gather and share information about your neighborhood.



More information can be found at www.usaonwatch.org and www.lapdonline.org. Also, be sure to visit the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa's Public Safety Committee page at www.ncwpdr.org/publicsafety.