

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Fountain Valley Police Department

10200 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley CA 92708
Daniel S. Llorens, Chief of Police

Police Phone Numbers

Non-Emergency: 714-593-4485 / 714-593-4486
Watch Commander: 714-593-4487
Crime Prevention Office: 714-593-4526
Crime in Progress: 9-1-1

Neighborhood Watch

Office: 714-593-4488
Report Graffiti: 714-593-4604

Fall 2013 Issue

Welcome FALL!!!

Tis the season for pumpkins, Halloween costumes, apples, pies, and holiday preparations!

We continue to promote crime prevention and personal safety. Visit www.fvdpd.org to find a variety of information and to sign-up for Neighborhood Watch Bulletins, Crime Trend Bulletins, and Monthly Crime Data.



Kellie Hopkins - Neighborhood Watch Volunteer

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

Trick-or-Treaters will soon be visiting in our neighborhoods, and we hope some safety tips from the **Fountain Valley Police Department** will help in making it a safe and enjoyable holiday.

For Our Trick-or-Treaters:

- Children should be accompanied by an adult. Map out a safe route together.
- Walk, don't run, and stay on sidewalks.
- Don't hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Obey all traffic and pedestrian regulations.
- Make sure the kids don't take short cuts through backyards, alleys, or playing fields.
- It is better for the small kids to stop Trick-or-Treating by nightfall; but, if you decide to let the kids stay out in the dark, then carry a flashlight.
- Wear costumes with reflective markings or tape.
- Instead of a mask, try make-up. Masks can be hot and obstruct your child's view.
- Don't assume the right of way because sometimes motorists have trouble seeing Trick-or-Treaters.
- Make sure your Trick-or-Treaters know *NOT* to sample their treats until they have brought them home, and you have checked them.
- Remind your Trick-or-Treaters that they are never to enter a stranger's home or car.
- Only visit homes that have a porch light on.
- Stay away from and don't pet animals you do not know.
- Make sure your children know their address and how to dial 9-1-1.
- Make sure your children know how to "Stop-Drop-Roll" if their clothes were to catch on fire.

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HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

For the Homeowners:

- Go to the door with your child as a safety precaution.
- If you plan to hand out candy at home, please have your porch lights on.
- Check your yard, and if you see anything that can create a hazard, please remove it.
- If you are out there driving around, please drive slowly, and be on the look-out for our Trick-or-Treaters.
- Battery powered Jack O’lanterns are preferable to using candles.
- If you have a pet, please make sure your pet is kept inside your home and away from Trick-or-Treaters. Halloween can be scary for your pets also.



TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME®

HOLIDAY SAFETY INFORMATION HOLIDAY CRIME TIPS

During the holidays, we can easily be a target for crime as we become distracted with the stresses and obligations that often accompany holiday preparations. While we want to enjoy the celebration of the season, we also want to be mindful of the safety and security of our property and ourselves. Below is a list of safety tips that can help reduce your chances of becoming a holiday crime statistic.

VACATION HOLIDAYS AWAY FROM HOME

- Lights and timers - change light bulbs just before leaving on your trip. Set lights, TV, and other electronic devices on timers so they go off and on throughout your house to mimic your routine when you are home.
- Notify a trusted friend or neighbor - leave an extra set of keys and an emergency phone number where you can be reached. Have them pick up mail, newspapers and flyers, take trash in and out, open and close drapes, whatever helps to make your house look occupied.
- Please don't forget to lock your doors, garage, windows, and sliders.

IDENTITY THEFT

- Use only one credit card to make all on-line purchases. It is important to make your financial transactions on a secure site which either has an "s" at the end of the "http" or a closed padlock icon in the browser bar. If the padlock is open, it is pretty safe to assume it is not a secure website. You may not see these secure landmarks until you are on the order page. Do not give more information than is absolutely necessary to place the order. Monitor receipts and statements closely. Immediately report suspicious or unusual statement activity. DO NOT use an ATM card to make on-line purchases. It is your financial life.
- Do not place anything with personal information in the trash. Shred all mail correspondence, bills, and credit card offers, anything that can be used to obtain your personal information.
- Clean out your wallet or purse. Remove any unnecessary credit cards, debit cards, your Social Security card, and other unneeded documents that could compromise your identity if lost or stolen while shopping. Place them in a secure location. The more documents you have on you, the more difficult and time-consuming it will be to report and recover from your loss if they are stolen.

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HOLIDAY SAFETY INFORMATION HOLIDAY CRIME TIPS

GIFT CARDS

Ways to reduce your chances of becoming a victim when you buy gift cards:

- It is possible to become a victim of theft when you buy gift cards from a display rack. In some cases, criminals are jotting down the gift card numbers. They wait a few days, and then they call to find out the balance on the card. If the card has been used by its rightful recipient, and there is still a balance, they go online and shop.
- To avoid this from happening, you may want to purchase gift cards from a customer service person or online where the gift cards are not viewable to the public.
- You can also spend your gift card money all at one time, and then there would be no balance for a criminal to use.

SHOPPING

- During daylight hours, when you know you will be returning to your car after dark, park directly under lights and as close to the entrance doors as possible. Do not burden yourself with packages in the lot. Drive to the entrance and have the packages delivered to your car. Most shopping centers offer this service, especially during the holidays. Don't forget to lock up your car doors and windows.
- If you must leave items in the car, place them out of sight and in as secure a place as possible. If placing them in the trunk, do it prior to your arrival. Placing items in the trunk just before leaving your car is an open invitation to any observer with criminal intent.
- Carry only what you need to make your purchases - your ID, cash, a checkbook, and one or as few credit cards as possible. Do not flash cash - Be cautious about how you handle your money and credit cards, and carry these items close to your person, in a hip pack, positioned against your stomach, or in your front pants pocket. Leave backpacks and large purses at home.
- Credit Card Receipts: Make sure these receipts do not contain your full account number. All electronically printed credit and debit card receipts must shorten (truncate) the account information to no more than the last five digits of the card number. The expiration date of the card should not be on the receipt. This information does not apply to handwritten or imprinted receipts.
- When a consumer pays with a credit card, the merchant cannot record any personal information other than what is on the front of the credit card. When the consumer pays by check, the merchant should not record a credit card number on the check.

CHARITABLE GIVING

Many frauds and scams use Law Enforcement, Fire, Paramedics, diseases, or other disorders which play on your sympathy, passion, or patriotism in order to get money from you, especially during the holiday season.

- Question phone calls or requests by mail or Internet soliciting donations for a "worthy cause".
- Research their legitimacy before committing. Ask for information to be sent to you. Ask how they got your name and number.
- NEVER make a "right now or never" or "once in a lifetime opportunity" decision. Legitimate organizations are proud of their cause, and will gladly provide you with as much information as you need to rally you to their organization's cause. They welcome donations any time of year.
- If your refusal to donate or request for information results in verbal abuse, hang up. If you receive abusive correspondence, report it.

You've heard it before - If it sounds too good to be true, it is. If it's free, you can't afford it.

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TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME®

CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

A Christmas tree purchased from a lot or cut on a tree farm can remain relatively fire resistant if you follow these simple steps:

- Cut 2-3 inches off the bottom of a fresh tree and put the tree in water immediately. This prevents the sap from forming off the cut and allows the tree to absorb the water. Use a sturdy holder and fill with water daily.
- Check lights carefully for broken sockets or frayed wires before you put them on your tree. Replace any strings that look damaged.
- Keep your tree away from heat sources, such as a fireplace or heaters, which will dry it out.
- Unplug the tree lights and any outdoor lights when you go to bed or leave for the evening.
- Avoid placing breakable ornaments and ornaments with small parts on lower branches where children or pets can reach them. Ornaments and other holiday decorations should be non-combustible or flame resistant.
- Do not burn wrapping paper or tree branches in your fireplace.
- Dispose of your tree right after the holiday is over.

IT'S THE SEASON FOR RESPONSIBLE HOSTING

The decision to serve alcoholic beverages in your home carries with it a responsibility for the welfare of your guests. Responsible attitudes towards drinking should make us behave in such a way that we never regret a foolish decision made under the influence of alcohol. People don't like to admit that they are impaired and may argue that they are capable of driving. Share with your guests the fact that impairment begins with the very first drink, and remind them of the penalties they face if convicted of driving under the influence. Be a loyal friend and responsible host. Have a contingency travel plan for guests who are impaired.

Orange County Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) suggest to:

- Set a drink limit, and don't push drinks—push food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- If you serve an alcoholic punch, make it with a non-carbonated base.
- Never let your guests drink and drive.
- Never serve alcohol to anyone less than 21 years of age.
- Don't ride in a car with anyone who is impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- Have a designated driver for all party events.

For more information on these or other crime prevention or related topics, please contact the Fountain Valley Police Department Crime Prevention Unit.

IMPORTANT RESOURCE INFORMATION

FOUNTAIN VALLEY POLICE/FIRE EMERGENCY 9-1-1

NON-EMERGENCY/DISPATCH: (714)-593-4485

POLICE BUSINESS LINE: (714)-593-4485

WEBSITE: <http://www.fvdpd.org>

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT CONTACTS:

nancy.lopez@fountainvalley.org or joanne.minney@fountainvalley.org