



CRIME PREVENTION: Vehicle Theft & Vehicle Burglary

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GENERAL SAFETY

- Never leave your car running or the keys in the ignition when you're away from it, even for 'just a minute.'
- Never hide your keys on your vehicle. (Surfers, take your keys with you!)
- Always roll up the windows and lock the car, even if it's in front of your home.
- Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Put them in the trunk or at least out of sight.
- Park in busy, well-lit area. When you pay to park in a lot or garage, leave just the ignition or valet key with the attendant. Make sure no personal information is attached.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

- Prior to exiting the safe surroundings of a store or building, make sure that you visibly scan the parking lot and exterior of the location for anyone loitering
- Approach your vehicle with your keys already in your hand and scan the parking lot for any suspicious activity before entering your vehicle.
- Keep your cell phone close by should you need to dial 911.
- Intentionally set off your car's alarm to purposely draw attention to yourself.
- As you near your parking spot, check out the vehicles close to it. If someone is just sitting in the car beside yours or it has extra tinted windows, or if anything looks suspicious, turn around and go back inside.

- Once you arrive at your vehicle, have your packages stored and once you have entered your vehicle immediately lock your doors, put on your seat belt, and exit the parking lot.

REDUCE THE RISK OF CAR BURGLARIES.

- 1.** Keep your car visible. Park in well-lit areas. Avoid having your car concealed by larger vehicles; thieves like to work in private.
- 2.** Don't make it easy. Keep windows and sunroofs closed and doors locked. Almost 1/4th of thefts from vehicles are from unlocked cars.
- 3.** Activate your vehicle's alarm. Don't have one? Factory installed anti-theft systems are best, but a professionally installed alarm can discourage a car thief who likes to work in silence.
- 4.** Hide your valuables. Many smash-and-grab thieves act on impulse, so keep your stuff out of sight - either with you or in a locked trunk. Don't count on the glove box; thieves know to look there, and they're easy to break into.
- 5.** If you have a wagon or SUV that leaves your cargo area open, get a retractable fitted cover to keep shopping bags or other belongings hidden.
- 6.** Take your keys with you. If you think you have a great hiding place for a spare key, car break-in thieves know to look above the visor, in the center console, under the floor mat, in the trunk well, etc.
- 7.** Stow your stuff before arrival. Experienced thieves often stake out parking lots to watch for people putting items in their trunk. Help prevent car break-ins by putting valuables like laptops, messenger bags, and electronic devices into your trunk before you get to the parking lot.

8. Stash the evidence, too. After you've put your stuff in the trunk, don't forget such telltale evidence as power plugs, MP3 adapters, and navigation system windshield suction-cup mounts. Thieves know what they're looking for, so hide the electronic accessories, too.

9. Trust your instincts. If you see suspicious activity, find another spot to park.

10. Take it one more step. Many vehicles are broken into with the intent of stealing the vehicle itself. Visible anti-theft devices, like steering wheel locks, steering column collars, or brake pedal locks may discourage the would-be thief from trying.

WHAT ABOUT CARJACKING

- Carjacking - stealing a car by force - has captured headlines in the last few years. Statistically, your chances of being a carjacking victim are very slim, and preventative actions can reduce the risk even more.
- Approach your car with the key in hand before getting in. Look around and inside before getting in.
- When driving, always keep your car doors locked and windows rolled up.
- Be especially alert at intersections, gas stations, ATM's, shopping malls, convenience and grocery stores - all are windows of opportunity for carjackers.
- Park in well-lighted areas with good visibility, close to walkways, stores, and people.
- If the carjacker has a weapon, give up the car with no questions asked. Your life is worth more than a car.



CRIME PREVENTION: Residential Burglary

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5 TIPS FOR SAFEGUARDING YOUR PROPERTY AT HOME

1. LOCK IT

We mention this a lot, but it can never be repeated enough because incidents of theft happen every day in Ventura! Lock your house, garage and vehicle doors, especially when you're not home or are sleeping. Many criminals simply just check to see if doors are unlocked, creating an easy opportunity. Most will move on if the door is locked and alarms or alarm signs are visible.

2. LIGHT IT

Whether you're home or not, leave the porch light on. Thieves thrive in the dark; keep it lit so they will keep away! Also, consider a sensor light that faces your driveway and side yards. Be sure to trim back bushes that could provide a dark hiding place for thieves.

3. HIDE IT

Don't leave your garage door opener in your vehicle. That's the easiest way for a thief to get into your garage and possibly your house. Take it into the house with you as you leave your car. If you are out in our community and need to leave property in your car be sure to secure the property in your trunk.

4. REMOVE IT

Bring your keys, iPad, phone, laptop, tablet, spare change, sweet new gym shoes and all other valuables in the house; don't leave

them in your car. Leaving things in the car is as if you are advertising/encouraging window shopping for a potential thief. If they see it and like it, they may go into the 'store' (your car or home). Don't leave valuables lying out in the open in your home either; especially by a window. Put it away!

5. REPORT IT

Notice anything or anyone suspicious? Call 911 if it's an emergency or crime in progress. Otherwise, phone the Ventura Police Department's 24 non-emergency number to report suspicious activity at **805-650-8010**.

Are you a victim of crime? File a report at www.venturapd.org.

Start and participate in the Neighborhood Watch Program by calling 805-339-4423

OTHER GENERAL TIPS

- Consider getting a monitored alarm system with audible warnings to scare intruders away. With a monitored alarm system, you would get a phone call from your alarm company first to assess the situation and, if the situation warrants, the police would be called to the scene.
- Inventory your valuables. Create a list with models and serial numbers, and descriptions of items and costs. Email this list to yourself so you'll always have an electronic copy if your computer is stolen during a burglary. This will be needed by police and your insurance.
- Get an engraver at a hardware store to mark your valuables with your California state driver's license number or ID card number. If your name was Mary A. Smith, for example, your engraving would read: CA-SMITHMA123RP-DL. CA is for California, followed by the license or ID number,

and the D stands for Driver's License. Police have the ability to look up a driver's license number your name and address. If an engraved item is stolen from you and then pawned or traded, it can be traced back to you by the number you engraved on it.

- Lock up any outside ladders, furniture and lawn equipment, including garbage cans, that can be used as leverage to gain entry into upstairs windows.
- Do not try to hide any house keys in your yard. It is best to leave them with a trusted neighbor or friend.
- Leave your radio or television set on while you're away.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Solicitors going house to house
- Suspicious/unfamiliar subjects walking or loitering in the area
- Occupied suspicious vehicles that appear out of place and are not normally parked in the area or you are unfamiliar with.
- Anyone carrying property that seems suspicious or out of place

COMMONLY STOLEN ITEMS

Take special care to lock up or store these items safely.

- Medication, especially pain-killer narcotics (Discard any unused medications immediately.)
- Guns and other sporting equipment
- Jewelry
- Cash
- Computers and Electronics
- Tools



CRIME PREVENTION: Internet Safety & Phone Scams

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SPOTTING A SCAM

Here are a few red flags to help you spot telemarketing scams. If you hear a line that sounds like this, say 'no, thank you,' hang up, and file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov/complaint:

- You've been specially selected.
- You'll get a free bonus if you buy our product.
- You've won one of five valuable prizes or have won a foreign lottery
- This investment is low risk and provides a higher return than you can get anywhere else.
- You have to make up your mind instantly.

HOW THEY HOOK YOU

Travel Packages: 'Free' or 'low cost' vacations can end up costing a bundle in hidden costs. Some of these vacations never take place, even after you've paid.

Credit and loans: Advance fee loans, payday loans, credit card protection, and offers to lower your credit card interest rates are very popular schemes, especially during a down economy.

Sham or exaggerated business and investment opportunities: Promoters of these have made millions of dollars.

Scammers rely on the fact that business and investing can be complicated and that most people don't research the investment.

Charitable causes: Urgent requests for recent disaster relief efforts are especially common on the phone.

High-stakes foreign lotteries:

These pitches are against the law, which prohibits the cross border sale or purchase

of lottery tickets by phone or mail. What's more, you may never see a ticket.

Extended car warranties: Scammers find out what kind of car you drive, and when you bought it so they can urge you to buy overpriced – or worthless – plans.

'Free' trial offers: Some companies use free trials to sign you up for products – sometimes lots of products – which can cost you lots of money because they bill you every month until you cancel.

PROTECT YOURSELF ONLINE

1. If you get a call from someone claiming to be a tech support person, hang up.

2. If you get an unfamiliar pop-up window, close it. If you receive a suspicious email or text message, delete it.

3. If asked to provide remote access to your computer, hang up. Never give control of your computer or provide payment or sensitive information to someone whom you do not know.

4. Be aware of and avoid suspicious links and websites.

5. Run current versions of anti-virus software on your computer. There are legitimate pop-ups from your security software to do things like update your operating system. But do not trust any pop ups telling you to call a number because of a computer problem.

6. Do not rely on caller ID. Scammers know how to change the name and number listed on the caller ID system to make it look like they are calling from a real business. If you're worried about your computer, call your security software company directly by finding the company's contact information online, on a software package, or on your receipt.

7. Never give out any of your passwords. Change your browser settings to block pop-ups from unfamiliar websites. If you see a pop-up alert, don't click on it and don't call any of the phone numbers listed.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:

- Keep your credit card, checking account, or Social Security numbers to yourself. Don't tell them to callers you don't know.
- Don't pay for something just because you'll get a 'free gift.'
- Get all information in writing.
- Check out a charity before you give.
- Ask how much of your donation actually goes to the charity. Ask the caller to send you written information so you can make an informed decision without being pressured, or guilted into it.
- If the offer is an investment, check with your state securities regulator to see if the offer, and the offeror, are properly registered.
- Don't send cash by messenger, overnight mail, or money transfer. If you use cash or a money transfer, rather than a credit card, you may lose your right to dispute fraudulent charges.
- Don't agree to any offer for which you have to pay a 'registration' or 'shipping' fee to get a prize or a gift.
- Beware of offers to 'help' you recover money you have already lost. Callers that say they are law enforcement officers who will help you get your money back 'for a fee' are scammers.
- Report any caller who is rude or abusive, even if you already sent them money. They'll want more. Call **1-877-FTC-HELP** or visit ftc.gov/complaint.



CRIME PREVENTION: Bicycle Theft

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PARKING AND LOCKING BASICS:

The first rule: ALWAYS lock it. Never leave your bicycle unlocked, even for a minute. A thief can steal your bicycle in seconds.

Security: Lock your bicycle to something that is permanent and difficult for a thief to take. Secure the bicycle to a bicycle rack, or a 'legal' immovable object. Do not lock to another bicycle, a door handle, or small tree. If you keep your bicycle in a garage, basement, or on a porch, lock it.

Visibility: Park in open areas where several people pass by and your bicycle can be seen easily. Thieves usually don't like an audience.

Keep It Close By: When possible, park your bicycle as near to your location as possible. Thieves like to steal bicycles whose owners are away from the area. Read parking signs for restrictions. No overnight public parking if you can avoid it.

Engrave identifying markings on anything removable to aid in recovery if parts are removed. Keep a record of all identifying information about your bike.

MAKE IT HARD TO STEAL

It has been found that most stolen bikes were either unlocked, improperly locked, or locked with inadequate locking devices such as lightweight cables or chains or low-quality U-lock devices. The U-locks have proven to be most effective; they are solid steel and are very hard to cut, but like all locks, they can be defeated. Use a high-end U-lock to reduce the chances of your lock being defeated. Always exercise care in where and how you lock your bike. Always lock your bicycle through its frame and the front wheel to an approved bicycle parking rack.

If it can be removed, it can be stolen! Quick release tires and adjustable bike seats are good examples of easily stolen parts. Lock all free parts of the bicycle as well or take them with you. If you lock only the front wheel to the bike lock, you may return to find your bike gone and only that wheel remaining. Leave your bicycle in a visible, well-lit area and check on your bike regularly.

REGISTER YOUR BIKE (It's Free)

Register your bike online at www.venturapd.org. All you need is the serial number. Registering aids in identification should your bike get stolen. In addition, any personalization on your bike (stickers, markings, etc.) should be documented. This makes it easier for police officers to identify your bike. This information should be stored and saved along with purchase receipts, manufacturer's information, and a photograph of the bike.

REPORT THEFT

Communication is essential if we are to tackle bike crime effectively.

Report immediately to the Ventura Police Department. You can report online at www.venturapd.org or by calling **805-339-4400**.

If you happen to witness a bike theft, dial **911** immediately and inform the dispatcher where you are and what is happening. Try to provide a good description of the suspect.

Contact the Ventura Police Department, your employer, or land owner about the installation of bicycle parking where secure racks are insufficient or non-existent.



DID YOU KNOW?

The National Bike Registry (NBR) estimates that 1 million bicycles are stolen every year worth approximately \$252 million dollars.



CRIME PREVENTION: Teen Drug Use

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SYMPTOMS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Marijuana- red eyes, reduced concentration, drowsiness, talkative, laughter, hunger, euphoria, relaxed, disoriented behavior and dramatic change in lifestyle.

Alcohol- Intoxication, watery glazed eyes, mood swings, slurred speech, unsteady walk, and loss of appetite.

Cocaine- Bright, staring, shiny eyes, excitation, euphoria, high pulse, higher blood pressure, restlessness, insomnia, appetite loss, dramatic mood change and runny nose.

Methamphetamine- Dilated pupils, bright shiny eyes, excitation, alertness, talkative, increased pulse rate and blood pressure, anxiety, insomnia, appetite loss, confusion, paranoia, and sweating.

Depressants - Constricted pupils, slow breathing and heart rate, slurred speech, disorientation, and drunken-like behavior.

PCP (Phencyclidine)- Wide staring eyes, hallucination, poor perception of time and distance, paranoia, irritability, panic, confusion, anxiety, slurred speech and loss of memory. May be drowsy or hyper; impaired coordination.

LSD (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide)- Dilated pupils, hallucinations, poor perception of time and distance; mood will be altered.

Narcotics/Opiates- Pinpoint pupils, euphoria, drowsiness, head nodding, and slowed breathing.

Steroids- Edginess, excitability, anxiety, anger, panic, depression, poor

concentration, shorter attention span, insomnia, swelling or bloating of the face and/or body, pimples on face and back, and increased muscle bulk. Threatening or escalating anger in relationship, more bad times than good times in relationship.

ACTION STEPS

- This is a crucial time for clear messages. Don't overreact and lose your temper, but your teenager needs a strong message that drug and alcohol use is not okay.
- Become aware of the drugs that teens use, what their effects are, and what your adolescent is likely to look like when under the influence. Check out a website like venturacountylimits.org.
- Get to know your child better. Find out how they see themselves, where they want their life to go, and what's important. Determine what drugs and alcohol do for them. Don't lecture, be clear and keep your message short and to the point. Spend time with your kid in recreation/ family activities.
- Find out the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your teen's friends. Get to know their friends. Form a network and keep in touch with the parents of their friends. Don't be put off if other parents don't share your concern about substance abuse. Don't be too shocked if you find that another parent is using drugs with them or is supplying the kids with drugs and alcohol.
- If you allow your teen the privilege of a cell phone, consider purchasing one that is GPS-enabled and provides a 'teen tracking' ability so you can monitor their whereabouts. Similar GPS devices are available for cars.
- Sleep-overs and teen parties are often a problem. Check to be sure that the other parent will be home and determine if they have the same curfew, values and expectations as you do. Kids often select homes of absent or permissive parents for sleepovers and parties.

WARNING SIGNS

- A drop in grades
- Moods are up and down
- Dishonesty and manipulation
- Early cigarette smoking
- Parental defiance
- Red, watery or glassy eyes
- Uses eye drops to hide red eyes
- Poor achievement
- Has delinquent friends
- Withdrawal from family activities
- Late or unexplained hours
- Rejection of parental values
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Disappearance of money
- Possessions have vanished
- Defensive about drug use
- Antisocial behavior
- Has drug-using friends
- Draws pot leaves or drug symbols



CRIME PREVENTION: Cyber Security

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PASSWORD SAFETY

- Passwords are the keys to your digital life. Make sure they are at least 10 characters long- including letters, numbers and symbols to make them harder to crack.
- Don't write passwords down. Consider using a secure password manager. Don't share passwords with friends; it's the same as giving them the keys to your house or your car- plus the power to see everything you've done and even impersonate you online. For the same reasons, don't save usernames and passwords on shared computers, and always log out when you're finished using someone else's device.
- Protect your data by backing it up regularly to an external hard drive or a cloud storage system.

COMPUTER SAFETY

- Get a camera cover for the webcam on your computer; an attacker can break into your computer, remotely activate it, and watch you.
- Don't open emails from people you don't know- and check the sender's email address by hovering the mouse over it, to make sure someone's not trying to pretend to be someone you do know. Never download email attachments you're not expecting to receive.
- Don't click on any links you don't recognize. If you must follow a link, copy and paste the link URL to make sure it's going to a legitimate site.

MOBILE SAFETY

- Set a password on your phone and be sure it's set up so you can remotely wipe the data if lost.
- Be very careful when downloading apps. Often hackers will create apps that look a lot like a genuine popular app but are instead malware that will steal your personal information.
- Disable Bluetooth on your devices unless you're actively using a Bluetooth connection. In public places, it opens your phone up to being hijacked and having your data stolen.
- Avoid open public Wi-Fi networks. They can easily be penetrated by hackers, or even set up and operated by data thieves, who can watch the traffic and see what you do online. Consider using a virtual private network, which encrypts everything your device transmits.

GAMING SAFETY

- Video games, on consoles, desktops and mobiles- are also potential security threats. Set strong passwords to protect your accounts from other gamers.
- Only download games from legitimate sites, to make sure you don't download malware. Just as you would with other apps and devices, be wary of people impersonating others or trying to get you to click on misleading links or download malicious attachments.
- Don't share personal information on gaming sites, or use gamertags or other profile information that could connect your gaming persona with your real life. Frustrations in games can turn into personal conflicts- with the potential to be very scary and even dangerous.

SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

- When you're on social media, don't befriend people you don't actually know in real life.
- To protect your privacy and to minimize the digital footprints future colleges and employers might find, don't post- or let friends post- embarrassing pictures of yourself or any other questionable material.
- Be aware of cyberbullies and online stalkers. Limit how much you reveal about your daily routines, habits or travels. If you ever feel uncomfortable or threatened by someone online, immediately stop communicating with that person and alert a responsible adult, like a parent, family member, or teacher.