



Crime Prevention and Reporting Tips

For the City of San Diego



Neighborhood Watch

Northeastern Division

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**Front Counter Hours of Operation
Monday through Friday 8 am – 5 pm**

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Introduction

This document does the following:

- Defines Neighborhood Watch
- Explains how to start a Neighborhood Watch program in your area
- Provides tips on personal, home and vehicle security
- Discusses how to:
 - Report crimes and suspicious activities
 - Provide information about crimes
 - Report other problems

Decades ago, crime rates across the U.S. increased at an alarming pace. Citizens and law enforcement agencies focused on developing crime prevention programs to help reduce this growing trend. In 1972, The National Sheriff's Association organized the National Neighborhood Watch Program. This pilot program was funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the U.S. Department of Justice and was designed to enlist the participation of citizens with law enforcement to help reduce and prevent crime.

The SDPD is committed in its support for Neighborhood Watch. This document defines Neighborhood Watch and presents five easy steps on how to organize a group in your neighborhood.

Although Neighborhood Watch has traditionally focused on home security in preventing residential burglaries, participants in the program should be concerned with personal and vehicle security as well. The tips provided in this document are simple, common-sense suggestions that will help keep you from being an easy target for a criminal at and away from home. They include tips for parents, seniors, travelers, office and business employees, babysitters, homeowners, and renters. Also included are things to do if you are a victim of stalking, domestic violence, and other crimes. Material on business security and financial crimes has not been included because it is more technical and is available on SDPD's Internet Web site at www.sandiego.gov/police . Another good source of crime prevention information is the National Crime Prevention Council's web site at www.ncpc.org .

It is equally important to know how to report crimes, suspicious activities, and other problems. The tips provided deal with the distinctions between emergencies and non-emergencies, and include phone numbers of various agencies that can be called. These tips also deal with providing information about crimes and other problems such as graffiti, litter, unsafe street conditions, code violations, and child and elder abuse.

Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program and social network that forges bonds among area residents, decreases crime, increases quality of life, and creates partnerships and shared responsibilities between police and the communities they serve.

How to start a Neighborhood Watch Program

Neighborhood Watch involves neighbors getting to know each other and working together on mutual problems. You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your community. Your neighbors are most likely to be the first ones to spot a burglar trying to break into your home or call for help if they see someone attacking you.

By cooperating with each other and with the police, people can help fight crime in their community before it ever begins. When neighbors work together with law enforcement, one of the best crime fighting teams is created.

Neighborhood Watch does not require frequent meetings, nor does it promote taking personal risks to prevent crime.

To help you start your own Neighborhood Watch program, the SDPD has made this simple guide available. The following steps will explain how to get a Neighborhood Watch formation meeting organized and what the minimum responsibilities are for a Block Captain.

STEP 1. If you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch program on your street, you first need to contact your nearest SDPD area station (listed at the end of this section).

STEP 2. Inform the area station that you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch group. It will refer you to your PSO (Police Service Officer). This officer will assist you in organizing your formation meeting and arrange to have a police department representative present.

STEP 3. Once you have agreed upon a date and time for the formation meeting with the officer, you will need to pass out an invitation flyer to all residents on your block.

STEP 4. This meeting should last approximately one hour and you will need to designate a Block Captain. The Block Captain will be the liaison between the SDPD and their neighborhood. He or she will be responsible for collecting names and numbers for all participants (with their permission), organizing future meetings / training, and, if interested, take a group collection for the purchase of Neighborhood Watch signs. He or she will also be responsible for maintaining these signs and keeping in touch with the police department.

STEP 5. In order to be an “active” Neighborhood Watch, you **MUST** have a **MINIMUM** of one Neighborhood Watch meeting per year. Your meetings **DO NOT** have to be crime prevention specific. We want to encourage social gatherings as well.

The following are some helpful tips:

- Choose a comfortable meeting site, for example: a residence, backyard, garage, church, school, community center, etc.
- After sending out your initial flyer, remind everyone of the meeting two to three days before
- Prepare an agenda and stick to it
- Distribute nametags for everyone in attendance
- Consider providing refreshments such as cookies and coffee
- With permission, exchange names, addresses, home and work phone numbers, and emergency contact information with everyone in the group. It is a good idea to include children’s names and ages, vehicles in each home, work hours and numbers, pet names, scheduled deliveries, and planned vacation dates.

Neighborhood Watch programs can be fun. Remember, people will most likely become involved and remain interested if the programs are fun, as well as meaningful. Use your imagination. Above all, get involved. It is the most effective way to reduce or prevent crime and make your neighborhood safe.

SDPD Area Stations

<u>Area Station</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Central Division	2501 Imperial Ave. SD 92102	(619) 744-9500
Eastern Division	9225 Aero Dr. SD 92123	(858) 495-7900
Mid-City Division	4310 Landis St. SD 92105	(619) 516-3000
Northeastern Division	13396 Salmon River Rd. SD 92129	(858) 538-8000
Northern Division	4275 Eastgate Mall SD 92037	(858) 552-7000
Southeastern Division	7222 Skyline Dr. SD 92114	(619) 527-3500
Southern Division	1120 27th St. SD 92154	(619) 424-0400
Traffic Division	9265 Aero Dr. SD 92123	(858) 495-7800
Western Division	5215 Gaines St. SD 92110	(619) 692-4800

This section contains tips on personal security when you are at home and away from home in various situations. They are simple, common sense suggestions that will help keep you from being an easy target for a criminal. They include tips for parents, seniors, travelers, office and business employees, and babysitters. Also included are things to do if you are a victim of stalking, domestic violence, and other crimes.

At Home

The following situations are considered: inside a home, answering the door, answering the phone, returning home, and caring for your children.

Inside a Home

- Keep all doors and windows locked, even if you are just going out “for a minute.”
- Install deadbolt locks on all doors.
- Don’t give maids, babysitters, valets, or others working in your home access to your home keys.
- Re-key or change all locks when moving into a new home.
- List only your last name and initials on your mailbox or in a phone directory
- Consider installing a home alarm system that provides monitoring for burglary, fire, and medical emergencies.
- Leave outside lights on after dark or have outside lights controlled by a motion detector.
- Keep drapes or blinds closed at night but leave some lights on.
- Leave drapes or blinds partially open during the day.
- Never dress in front of windows. Always close the drapes or blinds.
- Know your neighbors and keep their phone numbers handy. Have a friend or neighbor check on you daily if you are home alone.
- Try never to be alone in the laundry room or any other common area in an apartment building.
- Have government and other regular checks sent directly to your bank.
- Call the police **(858) 484-3154** or **911** if you hear or see something suspicious. Don’t take direct action yourself. An officer will be dispatched to your address even if you cannot speak or if you hang up (when dialing 911).
- Make sure your street address number is clearly visible from the street and is well lighted at night so the police and other emergency personnel can locate your home easily. Numbers should be at least six (6) inches high.
- Make sure your unit number (in multi-family housing developments) is clearly visible from paths in the development. A directory or map that shows paths and unit locations should be placed at the main entrance of the development.
- Provide the police with an entry code if your community or development has a security gate.
- Call your local SDPD storefront to request YANA (You Are Not Alone) visits for yourself, or elderly persons or other shut-ins who should be checked on periodically.

Answering the Door

- Know who is at your door before opening it. Install a wide-angle peephole in your front door so you can look out without being seen yourself.
- Don't rely on chain locks for security. They are only good for privacy.
- Check photo registration cards before dealing with any solicitors, peddlers, interviewers, etc. These persons are required to obtain a card from SDPD and display it on the front of their clothing. They are allowed to solicit only between 9:00 am and 8:00 pm, except by appointment.
- Post a NO SOLICITING sign if you do not want any solicitor to ring your doorbell, knock on your door, or make any other sound to attract your attention.
- Ask for photo identification before letting in anyone you don't know. Check out the identification with the company or agency if you are suspicious.
- Never let a stranger enter your home to use the telephone. Offer to make the call yourself in an emergency.

Answering the Phone

- Never give your name or number to a person making a wrong-number phone call or to anyone you don't know.
- Hang up if you receive a threatening or harassing phone call. Call the police if these calls are repeated.
- Don't indicate you are home alone to anyone you don't know.
- Don't give your name or whereabouts on your answering machine message. Never say you are not home.
- Beware if an unknown caller says you have won a prize but asks you to send money first, says you have to act right away, tells you to wire money, offers to have someone to pick up a payment from your home, or says he or she is a law enforcement officer who will help you for a fee. Follow these guidelines to protect yourself against telemarketing fraud. Check all unsolicited offers with your Better Business Bureau at **(858) 496-2131**. Do not assume a friendly voice belongs to a friend. Never give your credit card, checking account, or Social Security number to an unknown caller.
- Request additional information by calling Know Fraud at **(877) 987-3728** or visiting its website at www.consumer.gov/knowfraud. Other resources for dealing with telemarketing fraud, identity theft, privacy, credit reporting, and related problems include: Federal Trade Commission Consumer Response Center at **(877) 382-4357** and www.ftc.gov, Federal Communications Commission Consumer Center at **(888) 225-5322** and www.fcc.gov/ccb/consumer_news/, and California Department of Consumer Affairs Consumer Information Center at **(800) 952-5210** and www.dca.gov/r_r/Telemark.pdf.

Returning Home

- Have the person driving you home wait until you are safely inside.
- Leave outside lights on if you will return after dark.
- Have your key in hand so you can open the door immediately.
- Don't go in or call out if you suspect someone has broken into your home. Go to a neighbor's home or use a cell phone to call the police if a window or screen is broken, a door is ajar, or a strange vehicle is parked in the driveway.
- Keep your headlights on until you are in your garage at night.

Caring for your Children

- Know where your children are at all times. Make sure they return home promptly at appointed times.
- Know what your children wear every day. Avoid putting their names on the outside of their clothes. Children may respond more readily to a stranger who calls them by name.
- Be aware of anyone who pays an unusual amount of interest in your children.
- Never leave your child alone in a vehicle, restroom, store, playground, or other public place.
- Have your children play in a supervised area with friends you know.
- Establish a simple code word to be used if someone your child does not know comes to pick up him or her. Remind your child about the word periodically. Stress that this word must be kept secret.
- Walk your children to school and point out dangerous spots and safe places.
- Make sure that your child's school will not release your child to anyone but yourself or a person previously designated by you, and that the school will call you back to verify any call saying that designated person will come pick up your child.
- Ask the school to notify you whenever your child is not in class.
- Let your children know where you will be at all times and how to get in touch with you.
- Keep a record of your children's friends and their phone numbers.
- Post a list of emergency phone numbers in your home.
- Keep an updated information file on your children. Include pictures, fingerprints, footprints, physical characteristics, identifying marks, medical and dental records, etc.
- Be careful in selecting persons to care for your children. Meet them and check their references.
- Don't leave your children with anyone they don't want to be with.
- Encourage your children to talk to you and listen to what they say. Never underestimate their fears or concerns.
- Keep the home computer in the family room, not in a child's bedroom. Children should not have separate sign-ons. Limit and monitor their use of the Internet.
- Never allow your children to go alone to meet someone they have "talked" to online unless they actually know the person.

Teach your children:

- Their full name, address, and phone number
- How to make phone calls within and outside your area code, use **911** and other emergency numbers, and reach an operator.
- How to use a pay phone.
- Who they should call or go to in an emergency.
- Who is a stranger, i.e. someone neither you nor they know well.
- Not to talk or walk with a stranger.
- Things a child abductor might say, e.g., “Can you help me find my dog?” or “Your mom is hurt and told me to come get you.”
- To say **NO** and run away immediately if offered a ride by a stranger.
- Not to accept a ride or go anywhere with anyone who does not know the code word.
- Not to accept gifts or money from strangers, or let them take their photo. Have them tell you in anyone offers them gifts or money, or asks to take their picture or share a secret. Be alert for any new things they possess.
- The location of safe places away from home, especially on their routes to and from school, i.e., neighbors’ or friends’ homes, businesses, offices, etc.
- To run to the nearest safe place if a person appears to be following you or if a vehicle slows or stops by you.
- Not to hitchhike.
- To avoid walking or playing alone, taking shortcuts, going near deserted or abandoned buildings, and other dangerous places.
- Not to go out alone at night.
- Not to wander away in a store. Go to the nearest clerk and ask for help if they become lost. Don’t leave the store or hide.
- Not to open the door to a stranger or let an uninvited neighbor or acquaintance into your home – and not to even answer the door in certain situations.
- Not to tell anyone on the phone that you are not home. Have your child say that you cannot come to the phone and ask the caller to call back or leave a message.
- Not to answer the phone if he or she cannot take a message.
- To check in with you after arriving home, and to check in with a neighbor if you are not at home.
- Not to enter their home if a window or screen is broken, a door is ajar, or a strange vehicle is parked in the driveway. Tell him or her to go to a neighbor’s house and call the police.
- To keep all doors and windows locked at home.
- All the safety and security features of the home, including smoke and burglar alarms, panic buttons, fire extinguishers, door and window locks, outside lights, etc.
- How to get out of the home or building quickly in case of a fire.
- Not to go into anyone else’s home without permission.
- To tell you about things that frightens them or makes them uncomfortable in any way. Show them that you are always concerned about their safety and security.
- Never to give out personal information that can identify them.
- People they communicate with on the Internet are not necessarily who they might seem to be. Never go alone to meet someone they have “talked” to on line unless they actually know the person.
- Trust their instincts. If something does not seem right, it probably isn’t.

Away from Home

The following situations are considered: on the street and other places, at work, on elevators, when meeting someone new, at night clubs and social functions, traveling on vacation or business, while driving, in parking lots, etc., while riding a bus or trolley, when carrying a purse or wallet, and when babysitting.

On the Street and Other Places

- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Walk with a friend or family member.
- Walk with confidence and know where you are going. Be alert. Make eye contact with people you pass.
- Watch your surroundings. Leave any places in which you are uncomfortable. Be especially alert for suspicious persons around banks, ATMs, stores, your home, etc.
- Walk into an open business and call the police if you see anyone acting suspicious or following you. Do not go home.
- Don't go out alone at night, venture into unfamiliar or dark places, take shortcuts, talk to or accept rides with strangers, or hitch rides. Don't walk in or near alleys, on deserted streets, near dark doorways or shrubbery.
- Blow a whistle or scream to attract attention if you are threatened. Then try to get to a safe area.
- Learn self-defense. Take classes only from licensed instructors.
- Know where telephones are along your route.
- Carry change for emergency telephone and transportation. **911** calls are free.
- Carry identification, medical information, names and phone numbers of people to call in emergencies.
- Carry only necessities.
- Avoid verbal confrontations. They may lead to physical altercations.
- Don't leave notes on your door when you are away from home.
- Don't leave keys in mailboxes or planters, under doormats, or other obvious hiding spots. Leave an extra key with a neighbor.

At Work

- Keep all doors locked during office/business hours except those designated for public use. Some employees or security guards should be located to monitor each public entrance. Post signs to indicate areas that are open to the public and those that are for employee's access only. Emergency exits should be alarmed and marked for emergency use only.
- Keep all doors locked if you work after hours. Never open them to any strangers.
- Keep public restrooms locked or under observation.
- Lock up your purse and other valuables when you leave your office or workplace.
- Don't open the office/business alone, if possible. One employee should remain outside while the other checks inside to make sure it is safe to enter. It is also better to have two employees present when the office/business is being closed for the day.
- Don't make bank deposits alone, if possible. Vary deposit time, route, and method of concealing money. Carry the money in a purse or plain bag; never use a bank bag. Make deposits during the business day, not after closing time.
- Don't take out trash alone, if possible. Check outside first to make sure that there are no suspicious people near the door or trash bin. Keep the area well lighted and clear of any objects that could provide hiding places.
- Call the police or the alarm company to verify any report of a break-in and request to come to your office/business.
- Be familiar with the emergency procedures and alarms in your office/business.

In any confrontation with a criminal:

- Be calm and follow instructions exactly. Don't make any sudden moves.
- Don't risk your personal safety. Don't resist and try to be a hero.
- Consider all guns as loaded weapons.
- Activate alarms and alert co-workers only if you can do so without being detected.
- Observe the criminal's features, clothing, behavior, means of escape, etc. without being obvious about it. Being a good witness is critical in helping the police to locate and arrest the criminal.

On Elevators

- Don't get on an elevator with a stranger. If you do, stand near the control panel and be ready to press the alarm button and other controls if you are attacked.

When Meeting Someone New

- Exchange phone numbers only, no addresses.
- Let a friend or family member know where you are going on a first date.
- Consider a daytime meeting for a first date.
- Be assertive and honest, not passive or coy.

At Night Clubs and Social Functions

- Go with and stay close to a friend.
- Use prearranged signals to indicate that you need help or want to leave.
- Don't allow alcohol or drugs to impair your judgment.
- Watch your drinks and don't give anyone an opportunity to spike them.

- State your personal social standards and limits. Stick to them and don't let anyone change your mind.
- Avoid people who make you nervous or uncomfortable.
- Provide your own transportation when you go out alone.

When Traveling on Vacation or Business

- Plan your touring. Don't discuss your plans with strangers. Beware of strangers who seem overly anxious to help you. Select guides carefully.
- Get good directions to avoid getting lost.
- Stick to well lighted main streets and public areas. Ask about areas to avoid.
- Carry a minimum amount of cash. Use traveler's checks whenever possible.
- Leave your itinerary with a friend or relative and check in with them periodically.
- Store photocopies of your passport, tickets, and other important papers in a hotel safe.
- Don't stay in a ground-floor hotel/motel room, especially if you are a woman and traveling alone.

While Driving

- Keep your doors locked and your windows closed.
- Know where you are going. Stop and get directions before you get lost.
- Avoid driving alone, especially at night and in dangerous areas.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Drive to the nearest open business and call the police if anyone is following you. Don't go home.
- Keep your vehicle in gear when stopped for traffic signals or signs. Try to leave room to drive away if threatened. Be alert for anyone approaching your vehicle.
- Keep purses and other valuables out of view while driving alone. Put them in the trunk or on the floor.
- Honk your horn or flash your emergency lights to attract attention if you are threatened while in your vehicle.
- Keep your vehicle in good mechanical condition so it won't break down and leave you stranded on the road. Also keep enough gas in the tank so you won't run out.
- If your vehicle breaks down or runs out of gas, pull over to the right as far as possible, raise the hood, and call or wait for help. Remain in your vehicle with the doors and windows locked until you can identify any person who comes to help.
- Be wary of minor rear-end collisions, especially at night on dark freeway off-ramps. Remain in your vehicle with the doors and windows locked if you are uneasy or suspicious. Drive to the nearest open business to check the damage and exchange insurance information.
- Control your gestures and other reactions to keep "road-rage" incidents from escalating to violence.

In Parking Lots, Etc.

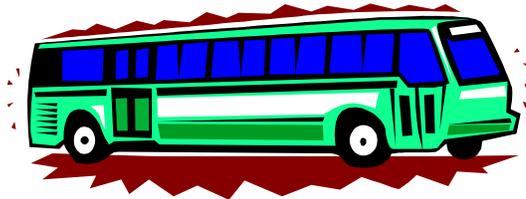
- Park in open, well-lighted, and populated areas near your destination.
- Avoid parking near trucks, vans, dumpsters, and other objects that obstruct visibility and provide hiding places. Avoid parking or walking near strangers loitering or sitting in vehicles. Check that no one is hiding on or around your vehicle before you get out.
- Report any lights that are out to the facility operator.
- Lock your vehicle and take your keys with you.
- Never leave any valuables in plain sight. Also, conceal things like maps or travel brochures that might indicate you are a tourist.
- Wear shoes or clothes in which you can easily run to safety if threatened. Kick off high-heeled shoes and run barefoot if you are pursued.
- Remember where you parked so you can return directly to your vehicle. Be alert and walk purposefully.
- Have your key in hand so you can open the door immediately when you return to your vehicle.
- Check that no one is hiding in or around your vehicle before you get in.
- Ask a co-worker or security guard to escort you to your vehicle if you work late.
- Don't leave your home keys on a chain with your vehicle keys when you use valet parking. Also, don't leave your garage door opener where it is easily accessible. Keep your registration, proof of insurance, and any other papers with your home address on them where a criminal is not likely to find them.
- Don't resist or argue with a carjacker. Your life is much more valuable than your vehicle. Be especially alert when parking at fast food places, gas stations, ATMs, and shopping areas along suburban highways.

When Carrying a Purse or Wallet

- Use a purse with a shoulder strap. Keep the strap over your shoulder, the flap next to your body, and your hand on the strap. When wearing a coat, keep the strap and purse under the coat.
- Keep a tight grip on your purse. Don't let it hang loose or leave it on a counter in a store.
- Carry your wallet, keys and other valuable in an inside or front pants pocket, a fanny pack, or other safe place. Don't carry a wallet in your back pocket.
- Carry checks or credit cards instead of cash. Don't display any cash you do carry.
- Leave credit cards you don't expect to use at home.
- Keep a record at home of check and credit card numbers, and phone numbers to call in case of theft or loss. Carry this information separately or store it in a hotel/motel safe if you are on a trip or otherwise unable to get home promptly to report a loss.
- Shop with a friend when possible.
- Avoid using poorly lighted or isolated ATMs. Complete your transaction as fast as possible and leave the facility.
- Don't fight for your purse if someone tries to take it by force.

While Riding a Bus or Trolley

- Have your fare or pass ready when boarding.
- Sit near the operator.
- Change seats and tell the operator if anyone bothers you.
- Avoid using dark or isolated stops at night.
- Stay alert for any possible dangers when exiting.



When Babysitting

- Know your employer. Only work for people you or your parents know, or for whom you have a good personal reference.
- Give your employer's name, address, and phone number to your parents.
- Find out where your employer is going and when he or she expects to be home. Give this information to your parents as well.
- Have your employer show you all the safety and security features of the home, including smoke and burglar alarms, telephones, panic buttons, fire extinguishers, door and window locks, outside lights, etc.
- Keep all doors and windows locked while inside. Leave an outside light on after dark. Keep drapes or blinds closed at night but leave some lights on.
- Keep the front door locked if you are out in the back yard or common play area.
- Follow the same security principles you use in your own home, in answering the door or phone, and in leaving and returning home.
- Don't say you are alone and babysitting when answering the door or phone. Say you are visiting and that you will take a message for the parents.
- Hold hands with the children when walking. When walking along a street, keep between the children and the street.



What to do if you are a Crime Victim

For reporting purposes, crimes and suspicious activities are considered as either emergencies or non-emergencies. Situations in which you, a member of your family, or a person in your care are attacked or threatened are considered as emergencies and should be reported by calling **911**. Crimes in which: (1) there is no serious personal injury, property damage, or property loss; (2) there is no possibility that the suspect is still at the scene or is likely to return to the scene; or (3) an immediate response is not needed, are considered as non-emergencies. These situations and suspicious activities should be reported to the SDPD by calling **(858) 484-3154**. The details of how to report crimes and suspicious activities are presented later in this document. Also included are the names and phone numbers of those SDPD units and other law enforcement and government agencies that deal with special situations and problems.

Other things to do if you are a victim of stalking or domestic violence are listed below:

Stalking

- Calling the police on **911** if anyone maliciously, willfully, and repeatedly follows or harasses you, or makes a credible threat that places you in fear for your safety. File a crime report and get a case number. A detective will contact you about the case.
- Get a TRO (Temporary Restraining Order) or have a police officer get an EPO (Emergency Protective Order) for you. Have the stalker served with a copy of the order. Keep a copy and give copies to your friends, relatives, co-workers, and employer. If you live in an apartment building, also give a copy to the manager, along with a photo of the offender.
- Alert your friends, relatives, co-workers and employer about your case. Have them file a police report if they are also victimized.
- Keep a record of all stalking incidents. Keep it in a secure place.
- Report all stalking incidents to the detective in charge of your case.
- Keep an emergency bag packed with clothes, money, emergency phone numbers, toys for your children, etc.
- Show a picture of the stalker to your neighbors.
- Alert your neighbors with a prearranged code or signal if the stalker is at or near your home.
- Move to a temporary safe house or shelter as a last resort. Keep the new location a secret. Get a US Post Office or private mailbox for your mail.

In addition to the other personal security measures listed in this section:

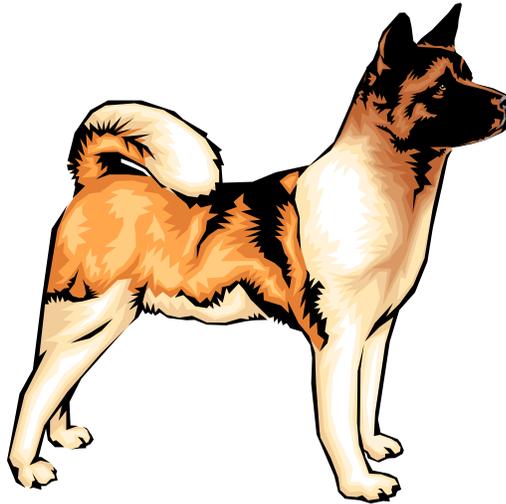
- Change your home locks.
- Never walk alone.
- Avoid public places.
- Vary your schedule and route when you drive. Know where nearby police and fire stations are located.
- Install a locking gas tank cap in your vehicle.
- Be alert for vehicles following you.

Domestic Violence

- File a criminal report and get a case number. A detective will contact you about the case.
- Get a TRO or have a police officer get an EPO for you. Have the offender served with a copy of the order. Keep a copy and give copies to your friends, relatives, co-workers, and employer. If you live in an apartment building, also give a copy to the manager along with a picture of the offender.
- Keep a record of all violations of the terms of the TRO or EPO. Keep it in a secure place. Report all violations to the detective in charge of your case.
- Keep an emergency bag packed with clothes, money, emergency phone numbers, toys for your children, etc.

In addition to the other personal security measures listed in this section:

- Change your home locks.
- Consider getting a dog.
- Get an unlisted phone number. Tell your friends and family to not give out the number to anyone.



Burglary is mostly a crime of opportunity that capitalizes on the carelessness and neglect of the homeowner or renter. This section contains tips on preventing home burglaries, vandalism, and other property crimes by controlling access, providing visibility, and maintaining your property. It also contains tips on protecting your home when you are away, as well as protecting the property you take with you. And if you do become a victim, it includes tips on helping the police get to your home and to identify your property. These tips can significantly enhance the security of your home and property. Many also apply to personal security.

Controlling Access

The following tips suggest how access to your home can be controlled by physical protection, deterrent measures, and various procedures.

Physical Protection

- Install single cylinder deadbolt locks on all doors. Bolts should have a minimum throw of one inch. Strike plates should have screws that are at least three inches long. Doors should be solid hardwood or metal clad. Hinges should be located on the inside or have non-removable pins. Special locks are needed on double and Dutch doors.
- Install locking devices on all sliding glass doors and windows.
- Install good locks on all doors that lead outside through garages or storage areas.
- Don't rely on chain locks for security. They are only good for privacy.
- Re-key or change locks when moving into a new home.
- Install locks on gates, garages, sheds, etc.
- Go to a locksmith or hardware store for advice on locks.
- Reinforce the glass in windows on the lock sides of doors so a burglar cannot break them and reach in to open the door or use a double cylinder deadbolt.
- Consider installing security bars on the side, rear, or other windows that a burglar might break to enter your home. Bars must comply with Fire Code requirements for inside release to permit an occupant to escape in the event of a fire.
- Fence in the yard.
- Plant bushes with thorns or prickly leaves near windows and along fences.
- Trim trees so that limbs don't provide access to roofs, second stories, etc.
- Call the SDPD PSO in your area for a free home security survey.

Deterrent Measures

- Post a Neighborhood Watch or alarm company sticker on entry doors and windows.
- Consider having a dog that can scare a stranger away either by barking or looking fierce. Keep an outside dog in a fenced area and have a good lock on the gate.
- Consider installing a home alarm system that provides monitoring for burglary.
- Use fencing, gates, landscaping, pavement treatment, signs, etc. to define clear boundaries between your property and adjoining properties.

Procedures

- Keep all doors and windows locked, even if you are just going out “for a minute.” If a window is left open a few inches for ventilation, it should be locked to prevent someone from opening it more.
- Lock gates, garages, and sheds after each use.
- Store bicycles, mowers, etc. in a locked garage or shed, or secure them to some stationary point.
- Don’t leave notes on your door when you are away from home.
- Don’t leave keys in mailboxes or planters, under doormats, or in other obvious hiding spots. Leave an extra key with a neighbor.
- Learn to recognize who belongs in your neighborhood, development, or apartment, i.e. residents, workers, guests, etc.
- Know who is at your door before opening it. Check photo registration cards before dealing with any solicitors, peddlers, interviewers, etc. These persons are required to obtain a card from the SDPD and display it on the front of their clothing. They are allowed to solicit only between 9:00 am and 8:00 pm, except by appointment.
- Be suspicious of persons making unsolicited offers of services.
- Post a NO SOLICITING sign if you don’t want any solicitor to ring your doorbell, knock on your door, or make any other sound to attract your attention.
- Ask for photo identification before letting in anyone you don’t know. Check out the identification with the company or agency if you are suspicious.
- Never let a stranger enter your home to use the telephone. Offer to make the call yourself in an emergency.
- Don’t give your name or whereabouts on your answering machine message. Never say you are not home.
- Don’t leave you home keys on a chain with your vehicle keys when you use valet parking. Also, don’t leave your garage door opener where it is easily accessible. Keep your vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and any other papers with your home address on them where a criminal is not likely to find them.
- Don’t give maids, baby-sitters, valets, or others working in your home access to your home keys.
- Call the police on **911** if you are at home and hear or see something suspicious. Don’t take direct action yourself. An officer will be dispatched to your address even if you cannot speak or hang up.
- Don’t go in or call out if you return home and suspect someone has broken into your home. Go to a neighbor’s house and call the police if a window or screen is broken, a door is ajar, or a strange vehicle is parked in the driveway.
- Don’t discuss your finances or possessions with strangers.
- Keep valuable papers, jewelry, etc. in a bank safe deposit box. Don’t store them at home unless you have a security closet or a safe that is well hidden or cannot be removed.

Providing Visibility

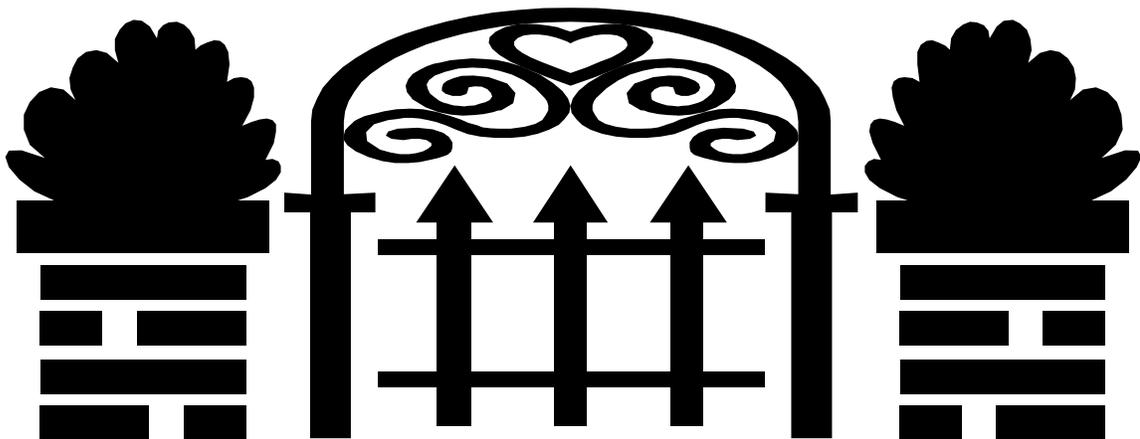
- Leave outside lights on after dark or have outside lights controlled by motion sensors. Make sure there are no dark areas around the house, garage, or your yard in which a person could hide. Street lights are generally inadequate for illuminating your property.
- Check lights regularly and replace burnt out bulbs.
- Trim bushes to less than three feet to eliminate possible hiding places, especially near windows and sidewalks.
- Trim tree canopies to at least eight feet to allow visibility into your property.
- Replace solid walls in front yards with open fencing to eliminate hiding places and make climbing more difficult.
- Install a wide-angle peephole in your front door so you can look out without being seen yourself.

Maintaining your Property

- Keep property in good condition and free of trash, litter, weeds, leaves, graffiti, dismantled or inoperative vehicles, and other things that indicate neglect in caring for your property.
- Replace broken windows or screens.
- Repair broken fences and gate locks.
- Use screens, wired glass, or other protection for light fixtures and bulbs.
- Remove loose rocks and other objects that could be used to vandalize your property.

Protecting your Home and Property When Away

- Use timers on lights, radios, TVs, etc./ to make them go on and off during the day and night to make your home appear occupied.
- Stop mail and newspaper delivery, or have a neighbor pick up anything left at home.
- Keep grass watered and cut. Water and trim other landscaping.
- Ask neighbors to watch your home and report any suspicious activities.
- Leave your itinerary with a neighbor so you can be contacted in an emergency.
- Disconnect your electric garage door opener and padlock the door, preferably on the inside.
- Call your local SDPD area station to request a vacation house check when you will be out of town.



At a hotel or motel when on a vacation or on business

- Use all available locks on the doors and windows.
- Unpack and place your belongings in the closet and dresser. Arrange things so you can easily tell if something is missing. Keep a list of all things you brought from home.
- Lock your suitcases so they cannot be used to carry things out. Consider hiding electric appliances and other valuable items in your suitcase.
- Don't leave cash, checks, credit cards, jewelry, vehicle keys, etc. in the room. Take them with you or lock them in the hotel or motel safe.
- Report any lost or stolen items to the hotel or motel management as well as to the police.

Helping the Police get to your Home

- Make sure your street address number is clearly visible from the street and is well lighted at night so the police and other emergency personnel can locate your home easily. Numbers should be at least six inches high.
- Make sure your unit number (in a multifamily housing development) is clearly visible from paths in the development. A directory or map that shows paths and unit locations should be placed at the main entrance of the development.
- Provide the police with an entry code if you community or development has a security gate.

Identifying your Property

- Etch your driver's license number preceded by CA on any valuables that might be stolen.
- Photograph valuables that cannot be etched.
- Keep a detailed, up to date record of your valuables. Include type, model, serial number, and fair market value.



Although a professional car thief can defeat most security measures and quickly break into and steal a locked vehicle, most vehicle thefts and break-ins are carried out by amateurs who take advantage of the carelessness of drivers in leaving vehicles unlocked, valuables in sight, etc. Thus, the tips in this section on preventing vehicle theft or break ins, helping to recover a stolen vehicle or property from a vehicle, preventing vandalism, and buying a used vehicle can significantly enhance the security of your vehicle.

Preventing Thefts or Break-Ins

The following tips help prevent vehicle break ins, which could lead to the theft of the vehicle itself or of property from the vehicle.

- Park in open, well-lighted and populated areas near your destination. Avoid parking near trucks, van, dumpsters, and other objects that obstruct visibility and provide hiding places. Avoid parking near strangers loitering or sitting in vehicles.
- Park in lots or garages where you don't have to leave your keys.
- Park in your garage, if you have one. Don't leave your vehicle on the street, in an alley, or on your driveway. If you have to park on a street, avoid dark or isolated areas.
- Turn off your engine, roll up all windows, lock all doors and the trunk. Take your keys with you, even if you are making a quick stop at a store or gas station.
- Don't hide a spare key in your vehicle.
- Don't leave your vehicle in an unattended public lot for an extended time period.
- Buy a vehicle with interior hood and trunk lock releases. Install a secondary hood lock if your car does not have one.
- Replace knob-type door lock buttons with tapered ones.
- Install an alarm system that will sound when someone attempts to break in, move, tilt, or start your vehicle. Always activate the system when leaving the vehicle.
- Check your vehicle if you hear the alarm sound. DO NOT try to stop a person attempting to break in. Get a good description of the person and call the police.

To prevent theft of the vehicle itself

- Turn your wheels sharply toward the curb when parking on a street.
- Use antitheft devices that can be attached to the steering wheel or column, or brake pedal.
- Install fuel or power cutoff switches.
- Buy a vehicle with a locking ignition or steering column.
- Chain motorcycles and bicycles to stationary objects when unattended.
- Consider having your VIN etched on all windows.
- See tips for personal security when driving and parking. These can also help prevent a car jacking.



To prevent the theft of property from a vehicle

- Never leave any valuables in plain sight. Remove cellular phones, audio systems, computers, packages, sports equipment, cameras, purses, etc. Lock them in the trunk before you park or take them with you.
- Install locking devices on batteries, wheels, audio equipment, etc.
- Make several slices through your license plate registration sticker after it has been placed on the plate. If the plate or sticker is stolen, call SDPD and the DMV immediately to report the loss, get a case number, and get replacements.

Recovering a Stolen Vehicle or Property from a Vehicle

- Call the police immediately and provide a complete description of the vehicle and any property taken from it, including a license plate. Vehicles should be described by: year, make, model, color(s), VIN, insurance company and policy number, license plate number and state, and name of any tracking and locator system installed in the vehicle. Property should be described by type, make, model, serial number, and fair market value.
- Etch your driver's license number preceded by CA on all valuable, removable items (i.e. audio equipment). Also etch the number on various places on the vehicle itself.
- Keep a record of the VIN, license plate number, and insurance information in your wallet or purse. Also be able to provide the information listed above for any property that might be stolen from the vehicle.
- Don't leave your vehicle title (pink slip) in the vehicle.
- Install a vehicle tracking and location system that can be activated after the vehicle is reported stolen.

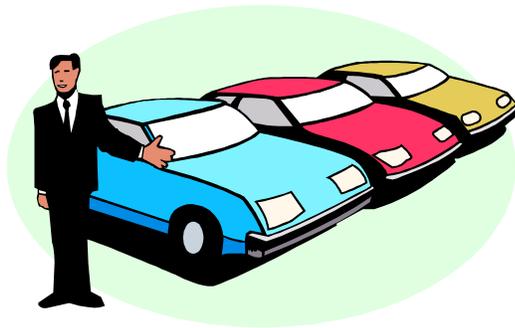
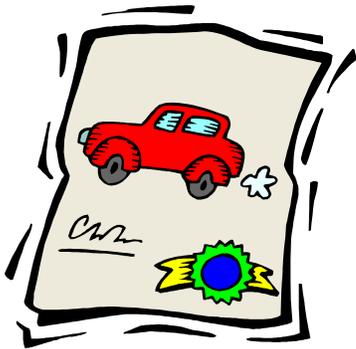


Preventing Vandalism

- Park in open, well-lighted and populated areas near your destination. Avoid parking near trucks, van, dumpsters, and other objects that obstruct visibility and provide hiding places. Avoid parking near strangers loitering or sitting in vehicles.
- Park in your garage, if you have one. Don't leave your vehicle on the street, in an alley, or on your driveway. If you have to park on a street, avoid dark or isolated areas.
- Don't leave your vehicle in an unattended public lot for an extended time period.
- Buy a vehicle with interior hood and trunk lock releases. Install a secondary hood lock if your car does not have one. Install a locking gas tank cap.

Buying a Used Vehicle

- Be suspicious of a ridiculously low price or a fresh paint job on a late modeled vehicle.
- Make sure the seller is the owner named on the vehicle title. Don't be afraid to ask to see some photo identification.
- Verify past insurance and financing, and current registration and license plate sticker.
- Make sure the VIN has not been tampered with and matches the number on the vehicle title.
- Obtain both sets of the original keys.
- Make sure registration fee paid to the dealer are sent to the DMV promptly.



Reporting Crimes, Suspicious Activities, and Information about Crimes

For reporting purposes, crimes and suspicious activities are considered as either emergencies or non-emergencies. Emergencies (situations that demand immediate attention) should be reported by calling **911**. Non-emergencies should be reported to the SDPD by calling **(858) 484-3154**, specific investigative units, or to other law enforcement agencies. Information about crimes committed in the City should be reported directly to the SDPD. If you do not want to get involved, you can call Crimestoppers at **(619) 235-8477**.

Persons reporting crimes are routinely asked for their names, addresses and phone numbers. This is done so that they can be contacted later if necessary during the investigation of the crime. Persons desiring anonymity should request that the officers responding to the call not contact them. Even if contacted later by a detective, the identity of the caller will not be revealed to anyone involved in the crime. In this sense, reports of crimes are treated as confidential and the identity of the caller is protected. However, if the case goes to trial, the report could be released to the prosecuting agency and, under rules of discovery, to the defense. It could also be subpoenaed in a civil trial.

The ability of the police to locate and arrest criminals often depends on the thoroughness and accuracy of the report you submit. The following information checklist should be used for reporting both emergency and non-emergency crimes.

- Type of crime
- Location – exact street address and nearest cross street
- Time of occurrence
- Weapons used
- Number of persons injured and type of injuries
- Vehicle information – type, license number, color, year, make, model, unusual characteristics (dents, bumper stickers), number of persons, etc.
- Suspect information – race, gender, age, height, weight, hair color, hair length and style, eye color, facial hair, clothing type and color, other characteristics (tattoos, missing teeth, scars, glasses, limp), direction of flight, etc.



EMERGENCIES

Emergencies include crimes that are in progress or about to happen, and ones that have resulted in serious personal injury, property damage, or property loss. They also include situations in which the suspect may still be at the scene and some suspicious activities. By calling **911** you will be linked to the appropriate police as well as fire fighting, medical, and ambulance services. You don't need money to call **911** from a pay phone.

When reporting an emergency be prepared to give an accurate description of the location, especially if you are calling from a mobile cellular phone or a fixed phone in a multi-unit building. The operator has no way of knowing where you are if you are using a cellular phone. He or she can determine your street address only if you are calling from a fixed phone. If you are calling from a gated community or facility, be sure to give the operator the gate access code. Answer the operator's questions about the emergency and don't hang up until you are told to do so. An officer will be dispatched even if you cannot speak or if you do hang up the phone.

The following are examples of crime emergencies.

- Fights, sexual assaults, etc.
- Homicides
- Burglaries and robberies
- Seeing a flashlight beam in a business or home, especially if the business is closed or the residents are away
- Domestic violence incidents
- Child and elder abuse
- Sounds of gunshots, screaming, barking dogs, breaking glass, explosions, alarms, etc.
- Hit and run accidents with possible injuries
- Vehicles containing weapons or property not normally kept in vehicles
- Ongoing dumping of fuel or other hazardous substances
- Road hazards that require immediate attention to prevent personal injuries and property damage
- Graffiti and other acts of vandalism in progress
- Runaway juveniles or missing persons who need special care. Be sure to tell the operator if the person needs medication or has a special problem (e.g. Alzheimer's)



Persons involved in the following activities should also be reported as emergencies.

- Driving under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs
- Entering a neighbor’s home when the neighbor is away
- Forcing an entry of a home, business, or vehicle
- Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms that pose a threat to him/herself or others
- Removing property from a business, home, or vehicle, especially if the business is closed or the residents are away
- Carrying or wearing bloody clothes
- Struggling with a resisting child
- Trying to or actually using a vehicle to pick up a person by force, especially a child or female

NON-EMERGENCIES

These can be reported to SDPD or to the law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction.

San Diego Police Department

The SDPD’s 24-hour number for non-emergency calls and general information is **(619) 531-2000**. (You can use **(858) 484-3154** from Carmel Valley, Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Penasquitos, and San Pasqual.) Crimes and suspicious activities that fall into this category are: (a) those that don’t involve serious personal injury, property damage, or property loss; (b) ones in which there is no possibility that the suspect is still at the scene or is likely to return to the scene; and (c) ones for which an immediate response is not needed. If there is any doubt as to whether the situation is an emergency, it is always better to be on the safe side and call **911**.

In the special case of school violence, there is a 24-hour Safe Schools Hotline that students, teachers, and parents can use to provide anonymous tips to the SDPD about safety concerns and potential problems at their school. The telephone number is **(800) 499-1116**. The calls will be answered by a police dispatcher, who will ensure the warnings get prompt attention. However, actual school emergencies should still be reported to **911**.

The SDPD response to non-emergency calls will depend on the relative seriousness or priority of the situation, the likelihood of making an arrest at the scene, and the availability of an officer. Response times are the longest for so-called “cold crimes,” like home burglaries where the perpetrator has left the scene, no suspect information exists, and the victim is in no further danger.

The following are situations that are usually not considered emergencies.

- Home and business burglaries in which the suspect is gone from the scene
- Open or broken doors or windows in businesses or homes, especially if the business is closed or the residents are away
- Stolen checks and credit cards. Also call the financial institutions involved to have them stop payments of checks and verify any charges.
- Impersonation and stolen identification (e.g. driver's licenses)
- Auto thefts
- Vandalisms
- Hit and run accidents without injuries
- Minors violating curfew
- Loud parties – the person calling must be willing to sign a complaint
- Road hazards that don't require immediate attention
- Past instances of graffiti or other vandalism
- Past instances of child or elder abuse
- Runaway juvenile or missing adult who does not need special care
- Car or building alarms
- Underage drinking
- Accumulations of consumer goods, especially in good condition, and not in use in homes, garages, and storage areas.

Persons involved in the following activities are usually reported as non-emergencies.

- Disturbing the peace (i.e. loitering, panhandling, noise making, and harassing others)
- Soliciting without a license, not displaying a valid registration card, or operating between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.
- Loitering near a business or home, especially if the business is closed or the residents are away
- Loitering near schools or parks
- Looking into parked vehicles
- Running other than for exercise
- Carrying property at an unusual time and place
- Entering and leaving property on daily or a regular basis, or in large numbers, especially at night
- Drunk in public but not in any immediate danger
- Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms but not a danger to themselves or others
- Offering goods for sale at ridiculously low prices
- Making a quick change of vehicles

Vehicles in the following situations are also usually reported as non-emergencies.

- Moving slowly, especially without lights at night, in an aimless or repetitive manner, or near schools or parks.
- Parked and occupied at an unusual time or place.
- Parked for more than 72 hours, possibly abandoned, or otherwise parked illegally on city streets.
- Parked on city streets but cannot be operated safely thereon because of a missing part of piece of equipment.
- Being loaded with property at a closed business or home when the residents are away.
- Being dismantled or repaired, especially at night or in a parking lot, garage, or non-business location.
- Being used for business transactions, especially near schools or parks.
- Being driven in an erratic manner.

You can also report non-emergency situations and suspicious activities directly to some investigative units during normal business hours if you have enough information for the unit to start an investigation. If no suspects exist you should file a crime report or fill out a CRF (Citizen Request Form) at a SDPD storefront, satellite office, or area station. The following units will take calls directly:

- **Gangs** – Call **(619) 531-1554** to report threats by known gang members, gang activities, and gang-related graffiti. Call **(619) 297-4264**, the 24-hour gang hotline, to provide information on incidents of gang violence. Your call can be anonymous, or you can leave your name for a detective to return your call.
- **Narcotics** – Call **(619) 531-2468** regarding suspected drug activities at a specific location or persons attempting to get drugs with forged prescriptions.
- **Traffic** – Call **(858) 495-7800** regarding violations of traffic laws at specific locations, e.g. speeding, running red lights and stop signs, etc. Because such violations are classified as infractions and must be witnessed by a police officer before any enforcement action can be taken, SDPD cannot act on complaints of specific violations by an identified vehicle. However, in the case of misdemeanor violations, e.g. reckless driving, DUIs, and hit and runs, enforcement action can be taken if a private person witnesses the incident and can identify the driver or the license number of the vehicle.

In 1998 the SDPD formed a STOP (San Diego Traffic Offender Program) team to deal with the growing number of persons driving with revoked or suspended license. The team sets up checkpoints and takes reports from the public. Call the STOP team at **(858) 495-7830** to report persons driving with revoked or suspended licenses.

- **Vehicle Abatement** – Call the SDPD Vehicle Abatement Office at **(858) 495-7856** regarding abandoned, wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicles or vehicle parts on private property (not yours) if they are not lawfully stored thereon. Call the SDPD at **(619) 531-2000** regarding any such vehicles or parts on city streets or public property. The vehicles will be inspected and steps will be taken to have them removed if they are in violation of the law.

- **Vice** – Call **(619) 531-2452** regarding prostitution, pornography, sales of alcoholic beverages to minors, loitering and drinking outside businesses selling alcoholic beverages, gambling, and violations of laws regulating police-licensed businesses, which include cabarets, card rooms, dance halls, massage parlors, “adult” entertainment establishments, swap meets, pawn shops, etc.

Other Law Enforcement Agencies

Crimes and suspicious activities of which the SDPD does not have jurisdiction should be reported directly to the proper agency. An exception to this is when the crime is in progress – then call **911**. The SDPD will notify the responsible agency. The phone numbers and jurisdictions of other law enforcement agencies for non-emergencies are given below:

- **California Highway Patrol** – Call **(619) 296-6661** to report reckless driving and hit and runs on the freeways. Call **(858) 467-3000** to report persons vandalizing freeway signs, over-crossings, and bridge pillars.
- **FBI** – Call **(858) 565-1255** regarding bank robberies and fraud, kidnapping, extortion, terrorism, espionage, interstate theft, and computer and telemarketing fraud. Call **(888) 324-3728**, a 24-hour toll-free confidential hotline, to report fraudulent or corrupt activities in law enforcement, the judiciary, or legislative and regulatory agencies.
- **San Diego City Attorney** – Call the Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit at **(619) 533-5600** Monday through Friday from 9 to 11 am and 1 to 3 pm to report consumer fraud, illegal disposal of hazardous substances, etc. Call the Public Integrity Unit at **(619) 235-5888** Monday through Saturday from 7 am to 7 pm to report instances of fraud, waste, or abuse of city funds or resources by city employees or others. This unit also investigates violations of state and federal campaign laws in city elections.
- **San Diego City Transportation Department** – Call the Stormwater Pollution Control Program at **(619) 533-3793** to report dumping of fuel or other hazardous substances in streets, natural streambeds, or into Mission Bay.
- **San Diego County District Attorney** – Call the Real Estate Fraud Subdivision at **(619) 531-3552** if you suspect you are a victim of real estate fraud.
- **San Diego County Sheriff**- Call **(858) 565-5200** regarding non-emergency situations and suspicious persons outside the City but still in the County.
- **US Border Patrol** – Call **(619) 662-7321** regarding activities of illegal or suspected undocumented persons.
- **US Post Office** – Call the Postal Inspector at **(619) 233-0610** to report stolen, opened, or rifled mail, mail fraud, telemarketing fraud involving mail, and other mail-related crimes.
- **US Secret Service** – call **(619) 557-5640** regarding threats to the President and other governmental officials, counterfeit money, and telephone and credit card fraud. For more information visit its website at www.treas.gov/usss.

Information About Crimes

Information about crimes committed in the City should be reported directly to the SDPD. If you do not want to get involved, you can call Crimestoppers.

San Diego Police Department

To provide information about a crime that is under investigation, call the detective handling the case. If you don't know the detective's name, call your local SDPD area station and ask to speak with the detective assigned to your case. If the case is being handled by one of the central investigative units, you will be given the name and phone number of the detective to contact.

Generally the City does not pay rewards for information about crimes. However, a recent City ordinance now authorizes the City Manager to pay a reward of up to \$500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of graffiti vandals. Claim forms for the Spray and Pay program are available at all City Community Service Centers and the SDPD Storefronts and Satellite Offices. Forms can also be obtained by calling the Graffiti Program Office at **(619) 525-8522**.

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a citizen-operated, non-profit organization that works in partnership with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to help solve serious crimes. It gives community members an opportunity to fight crime without "getting involved." If you think you might have information concerning a serious crime or felony suspect, call **(619) 235-8477**. The operator will take your information and give you a code number. All calls remain confidential. If your information leads to an arrest, you could earn a reward of up to \$1,000. The tip line operator will explain how you can use your code number to give additional information and how to collect your reward.

In October 1999 Crime Stoppers set up a special program with the San Diego Unified School District in which students can receive cash rewards of up to \$1,000 for tips or information that solve or prevent campus violence or vandalism to school property. These calls should also go to **(619) 235-8477**.

The SDPD is not responsible for dealing with all of the problems and incidents that affect public health, safety, and welfare, although in many cases it works with other agencies in addressing them. Problems involving graffiti, litter, animals, unsafe street conditions, certain municipal code violations, and suspected child and elder abuse should be reported to the agencies that have primary responsibility. All of these reports are completely confidential so you should not be afraid to give your name, address, or phone number.

GRAFFITI

Call the City of San Diego’s Graffiti Control Hotline at **(619) 525-8522** to report graffiti on public or private property. Your report will be verified and the party (property owner) responsible for removing the graffiti will be notified. If the graffiti is not removed, the City will use the enforcement remedies and abatement procedures in Secs. 54.0401 et seq of the San Diego Municipal Code to bring the property into compliance. Call **911** if the graffiti vandalism is in progress. The existence of rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of graffiti vandals is mentioned above.

LITTER

Call the City of San Diego’s Solid Waste Enforcement Unit at **(858) 492-5055** regarding litter on private or public property.

ANIMALS

Call the County Department of Animal Control 24-hour emergency number, **(619) 236-2341**, to report incidents involving animals that threaten public health and safety. Call the City Environmental Services Department Refuse Collection Division at **(858) 492-5060** during normal business hours or **(858) 573-1276** during other hours for the removal of dead animals. The following numbers can be used for other animal control services:

- Spaying or neutering, lost and found, operator assistance, etc. **(619) 236-4250**
- Licensing and rabies vaccinations **(619) 236-4646**
- Adoptions **(619) 595-4532**
- Noise abatement **(858) 694-3741**

You can call the San Diego Mediation Center at **(619) 238-2400** for help in dealing with people whose animals are causing unreasonable noise. Complainants are now referred to this private, non-profit organization of trained community volunteers because City agencies no longer handle these kinds of disputes.

Unsafe Street Conditions

The following conditions should be reported to the agencies and numbers listed below.

- **Holes and Cracks in Surfaces and Curbs** – call City Street Maintenance at **(619) 527-7500** to report potholes, cracks, and other problems with street surfaces, sidewalks, and curbs.
- **Missing, Damaged, or Obscured Signs** – call **(619) 527-7500** to report these problems.
- **Inoperative Lights and Signals** – call City Communications and Electrical at **(619) 525-8650** to report inoperative streetlights and traffic signals.
- **Hazardous Debris** – call the City of San Diego’s Solid Waste Enforcement Unit at **(858) 492-5055** to report hazardous debris on streets.
- **Needs for New Safety Measures** – call City Traffic Engineering at **(619) 533-3126** to suggest new crosswalks, curb markings, traffic signals, signs, speed bumps, additional street lights, tree and other obstruction removal, etc.

Code Violations

Call the City Neighborhood Code Compliance Department’s Citizen Complaint Intake Line at **(619) 236-5500** regarding violations of the City’s housing, building, sign, zoning, vehicle parking, weed abatement, and noise regulation. Some common violations that should be reported include vehicles parked in front yards, excessive weeds on private property, dilapidated or unsafe structures, unsecured vacant structures, uninhabitable rental housing, building or remodeling without permits, illegally posted signs, operating a business from a home, other illegal uses of residential property, and garages converted to living spaces.

To report code violations in person, you may visit your local Community Service Center (CSC). You can discuss the general problem with a Code Compliance Information Officer and make an appointment to meet with an inspector about your specific complaint.

Child Abuse

Call the County Social Services Department’s Child Protective Services Child Abuse Hotline at **(858) 560-2191** or **(800) 344-6000** to report situations in which you suspect that a child has been abused or appears to be at risk of being abused. Your report will be investigated and steps will be taken to protect the child and preserve the family unit. The SDPD will be informed if abuse is involved. If you know that abuse has occurred, you should call SDPD directly at **(619) 531-2000**. If the abuse is in progress, you should call **911**. The police will investigate, take steps to protect the victim, prosecute the abuser, and inform the County Social Services Department.

Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse

Call the County Adult Protective Services at **(800) 510-2020** to report suspected instances of neglect and psychological, physical, financial, or sexual abuse of elders and dependent adults. This agency carries out investigations and provides assistance and case management where appropriate. The SDPD will be informed if abuse is involved. If you know that abuse has occurred, you should call SDPD directly at **(619) 531-2000**. If the abuse is in progress, you should call **911**. The police will investigate, take steps to protect the victim, prosecute the perpetrator, and inform the County Adult Protective Services.

The following are some signs of various types of elder and dependent adult abuses:

- **Neglect** – inadequate clothing, missing medical appointments, dirt and unkempt appearance, malnutrition, dehydration, or lack of necessary medications, eyeglasses, hearing aid, etc.
- **Psychological abuse** – unreasonable or excessive fears, withdrawal, loss of appetite, agitation, unexplained bouts of crying, or confusion
- **Physical abuse** – bites, burns, and unexplained broken bones, welts, or bruises
- **Financial abuse**- transfers of large amounts of money, inability to pay bills or buy basic necessities, lack of knowledge of own finances, vanishing personal property, bounced checks and inability to balance checking account, or sudden, unexplained changes or bank account activity.
- **Sexual abuse** – unexplained venereal diseases or genital infections, bruising or bleeding in the genital area, unexplained pain or itching in the genital area, or torn, stained, or bloody underwear.

For more information about preventing and dealing with elder abuse see the San Diego City Attorney’s Safe Seniors website at www.safeseniors.org

Lost Person with Alzheimer’s Disease

After calling **911** to report a lost or found person, call the Alzheimer’s Association’s Safe Return Program 24-hour Hotline at **(858) 537-5040**. Your call will activate a community response team that will: (1) notify other law enforcement agencies, hospitals, transportation modes, the media, and other organizations, as appropriate; (2) provide support to the family; (3) provide new information to law enforcement agencies as available; and (4) notify all agencies when the person is found. You can also call Safe Return or visit your local SDPD Storefront or Satellite Office to enroll a person in the program and obtain identification for the person to wear.