

Discovery Bay Crime Watch

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2013

SHERIFF

DAVID O. LIVINGSTON

UNDERSHERIFF

MICHAEL V. CASTEN
Field Operations

ASSISTANT SHERIFF
MARK WILLIAMS
Patrol Division

CAPTAIN CHRIS SIMMONS
Delta Station Commander

LT. ALAN JOHNSON

Resident Deputies

JOHN ROCK

MICHAEL SCHEFTNER

School Resource Officer

DAVID ALLAIN

Emergency

911

Non-Emergency

(925) 646-2441

Delta Station

(925) 625-2341

Marine Patrol

(925) 427-8507

CHP

(707) 551-4100

Animal Control

(925) 335-8300

This Holiday Season



During the year-end holidays, people are often busy, excited and sometimes a little bit careless. The following safety and security recommendations will help to keep you, your family and your property safe during this holiday season.

At Home

- Be sure to lock doors and windows when you leave home, even if you will only be gone for a few minutes. For increased security, keep doors and windows locked even while at home.
- Do not display holiday gifts where they can be seen from a window or doorway. Ensure gifts are in a safe place before going away on a holiday trip.
- If you go out for the evening, turn on lights and a radio or television so that your home appears to be occupied.
- If you leave home for a holiday trip, have selected interior lights activated by an automatic timer. Have a neighbor or family member watch your home, pick up your mail and newspapers and park his or her car in your driveway from time to time.
- Participate in Operation Identification by marking your valuables and new gifts with a unique identification number such as your California Driver's License # (not Social Security #). Also, be sure to keep a record of all item serial numbers.
- Be wary of strangers soliciting for charitable donations. They may attempt to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays. Ask for identification, how donated funds are to be used, if contributions are tax deductible, etc. If you are unsatisfied with the answers, don't give.
- Test smoke detectors; ensure they are in good working condition.
- Use only fire resistant ornaments on a holiday tree and make sure electric lights are in good working condition. Do not leave the lights on overnight or when you are away from home.
- If you have houseguests, advise them of your security precautions and make sure they follow them.
- Avoid leaving boxes from purchases (especially TV's, VCR's, computers, etc.) out on the curb for trash pickup.

Shopping

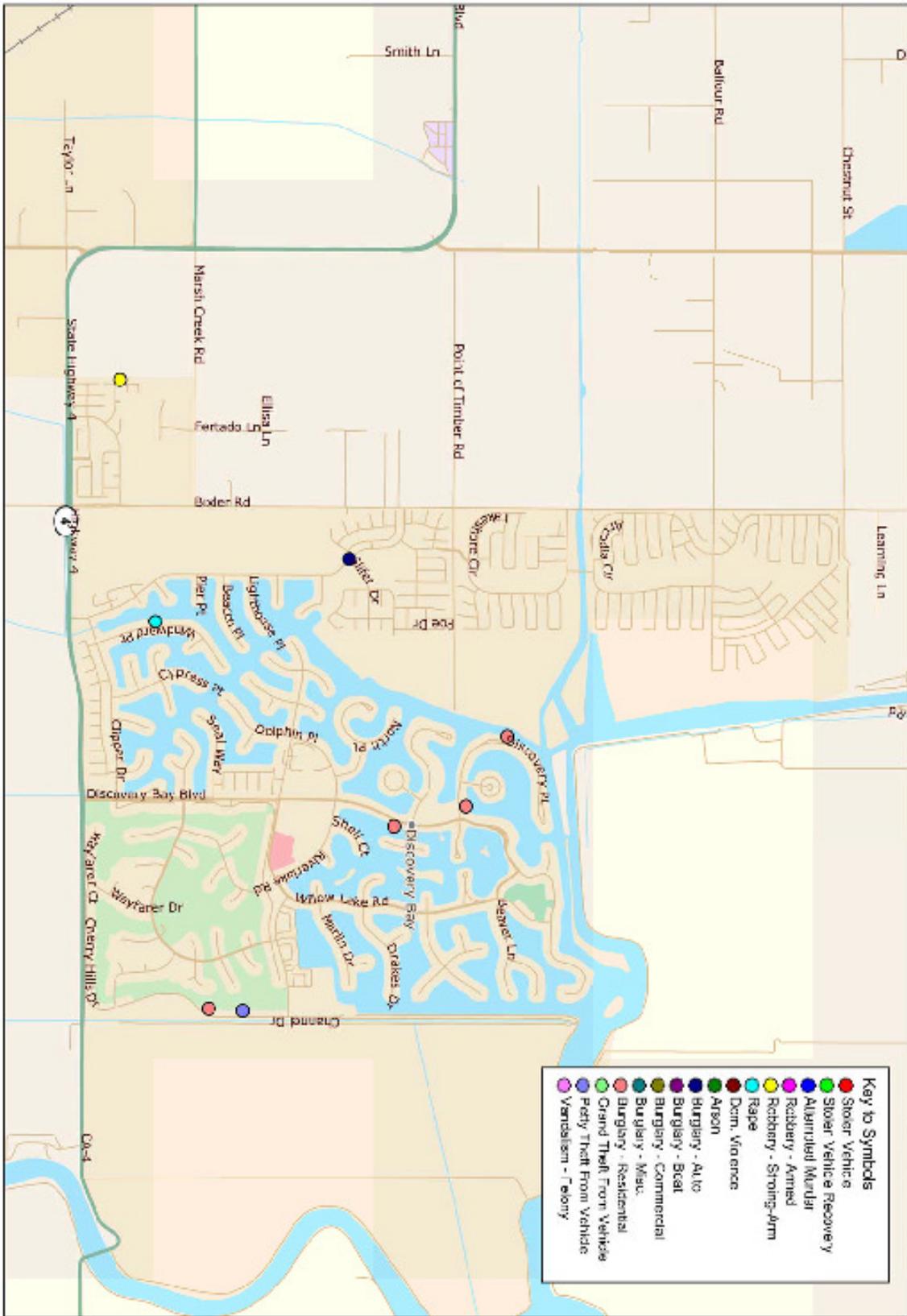
- Shop before dark and with a friend if possible. Never park in an unlit lot or area, no matter how convenient it is.
- Lock your packages and gifts in your vehicle's trunk.
- Keep vehicle doors locked and windows and sunroofs closed at all times.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with a check, credit card, or debit card when possible. Carry as few of these items as possible.
- To discourage purse-snatchers, do not overburden yourself with packages. Have purchases delivered whenever you are expected to be home.
- Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse securely between your arm and your body. Keep a wallet in an inside jacket pocket instead of a back trouser pocket.
- Teach children to go to a store clerk or security guard and ask for help if they become separated from you. They should never go into a parking lot or public restroom alone.

Holiday Party Safety

- Have non-alcoholic beverages available for party guests.
- Serve something to eat before serving alcoholic beverages. High protein foods stay in the stomach longer and slow absorption of alcohol into the system.
- Have alternative transportation for intoxicated persons. Do not let guests drink and drive.



SELECT CRIMES Discovery Bay October 2013



Created By
The Crime Analysis Unit
Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff





Residential Burglary

Discovery Bay Burglaries

In the month of October, Discovery Bay had four residential burglaries reported to the sheriff's office. In three reported cases forced entry was made through a side garage door or rear sliding glass door and one entry was made through a side garage window left unlocked. None of the homes burglarized had an alarm system.

Total approximate value of stolen property is estimated at \$48,000.00 dollars with damage for all four burglaries estimated at approximately \$1,500.00 dollars.

Residential burglary is defined as the unlawful entry of a residential structure with the intent to commit a crime, usually a theft. Although burglary is a non-confrontational property crime that is usually committed when the offender thinks no one is home, it can leave a victim feeling vulnerable and violated. In order to prevent this crime, it is important to first gain an understanding of who commits burglaries and why.

There is no one typical burglar, but many share common traits. Burglars may operate alone, in pairs or as part of an organized group or gang. Most burglars are motivated by the need to obtain quick cash or drugs. They tend to target property that is portable, valuable, and can easily be converted to cash and/or readily exchanged for drugs. Favorite items include small electronic devices such as iPods or MP3 players, cell phones, laptop computers, and video players. Prescription medication is also a popular target of these criminals. Most of these items can be easily transported in a common back pack.

The majority of home and apartment burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are away at work or school. Most burglars do not target occupied houses. Those that appear occupied—with the lights on, a vehicle in the driveway, visible activity, or audible noises from within—are less likely to be burglarized. Burglars routinely ring doorbells to confirm residents' absence. If someone answers the door, they say that it is a mistake and they are looking for a particular individual or a nearby address. Your home will be more vulnerable if it is vacant for extended periods of time. Signs of vacancy such as open garage doors, accumulated mail or newspapers and overgrown lawns may indicate that no one is home.

Houses whose residents are careless about security are particularly at risk. Burglarized houses often have unlocked or open windows or doors. Seasonal variations may determine burglars' access methods—summer months allow entry through open windows or doors, while winter months bring an increase in forced entry. Studies show that alarms, combined with other security devices, reduce burglaries. Burglars are less likely to gain entry when a house has two or more security devices (including window locks, deadbolts, security lights, and alarms).

When it comes to burglary prevention, you can reduce the likelihood of your home becoming a target if you take steps to increase the risk of detection to the offender, increase the level of difficulty required to gain access to your home and valuables, and reduce the perceived rewards of committing the crime. Never leave a house key in an obvious place outside such as under a doormat or flower pot. Remove keys and garage door openers from your vehicles, especially those parked outside. Lock doors and windows, including garage doors. This includes the door to your attached garage. During summer months, use secondary locks to secure windows in unattended rooms. Talk to your children about the importance of locking up. Look into improving the security hardware of your home to fortify entry points into the residence.

Create an appearance of occupancy in your home when you are away. Residential burglaries happen during the day when residents are gone to school or work. Making it appear that someone is home during these times can be a deterrent. Some things that you can do every day include leaving lights and television or radios on. When you are on vacation, stop the delivery of mail and papers, arrange to have your lawn mowed and garbage cans put out for collection, and set lights and radios on timers. Make sure that your home answering machine and your social networking web sites do not indicate that you are not home or out of town.

Report suspicious activity to the sheriff's department. You can contact 9-1-1 when what you observe appears to be a threat to life or property. If the activity doesn't fall under this category, contact the non-emergency number for the sheriff's department at 925-646-2441.

East Contra Costa County Cops for Kids Holiday Program

The Cops for Kids Program was developed 6 years ago as an ongoing project to acquaint the children of our community with police officers as a positive influence in their lives. We are made up of Deputy Sheriffs and Police Officers in Contra Costa County. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for the children of our community, through recreational activities and education. This program reaches out to children who are most in need and most at risk.



During our holiday celebration, we provide a warm meal to participating families. We provide coats, toys, books, bicycles, and educational material to children from birth to 13-years. The children are selected through the administration of our local schools and our School Resource Officers and our officers working on patrol throughout the year. At last year's event we had approximately two hundred guests.

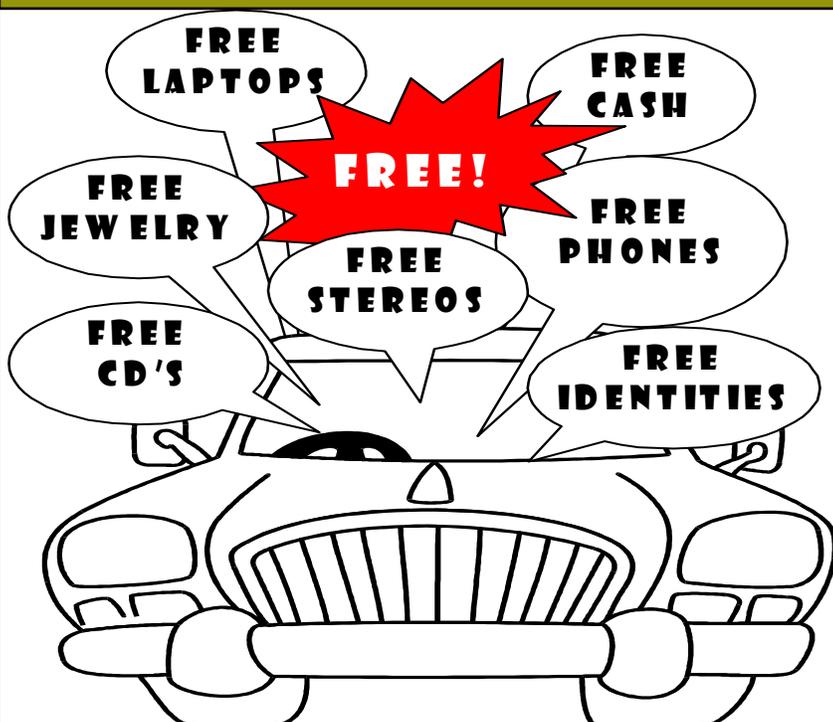
During dinner the children share in craft projects and learning activities with sheriff's deputies and police officers and staff. After dinner each has the opportunity to have a special conversation and photo with Santa Claus; they each select a toy or bicycle as a gift. Our gifts and celebration are part of sincere and humble charity. Our event and families are not sensationalized through the media.

Many of our children do not get enough to eat on a daily basis. We have noticed that many ask for an additional meal to take home; ensuring they have something for their next mealtime.

Our program depends upon the donations of funds, new unwrapped toys, laptop computers, and other educational materials. We will accept any type of donations at the Sheriff's Discovery Bay Annex during the week or you can flag down one of the officers on patrol in Discovery Bay. We have placed a toy barrel at the Boardwalk Grill in Discovery Bay also. This year's deadline for donations will be December 11th.

Thank you in advance for your help and for more information please contact me at (925) 634-0585 or you can E-mail me at Afont@so.cccountly.us.

This is what your vehicle looks like To a to a thief



Don't let yourself become a victim

Neighborhood Watch

Spread the Word!



Neighborhood Watch is one of the most effective means available for resolving issues within communities. Through organized problem-solving activities and information on a wide variety of crime prevention and "quality of life" topics, neighborhoods can reduce crime and address any community issue that concerns residents.

Working together to reduce crime in our neighborhoods benefits everyone, so spread the word to your family and friends. Contact me today to start a Neighborhood Watch group on your street.





Office of the Sheriff

Discovery Bay
Crime Prevention Specialist
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What's your Address?



Where is your address posted on your house?

By the door?

By the garage?

On the curb?

In case of emergency there are many agencies that may need to be able to find your home immediately. Fire/EMT, Ambulance, Sheriff, Marine Patrol.

Here is what you can do to ensure help arrives when you need it most.

- Numbers should be 3—4 inches
- They should be of contrasting color
- They should be lit if possible
- They should be clearly visible from the street or water way
- If they are painted on the curb, make sure the paint is appropriate for use on cement

Do you hide your valuables in one of these popular hiding places?

Dresser drawer

Bedroom Closet

Freezer

Guess what: Those are some of the first places a crook will look.

TIMING

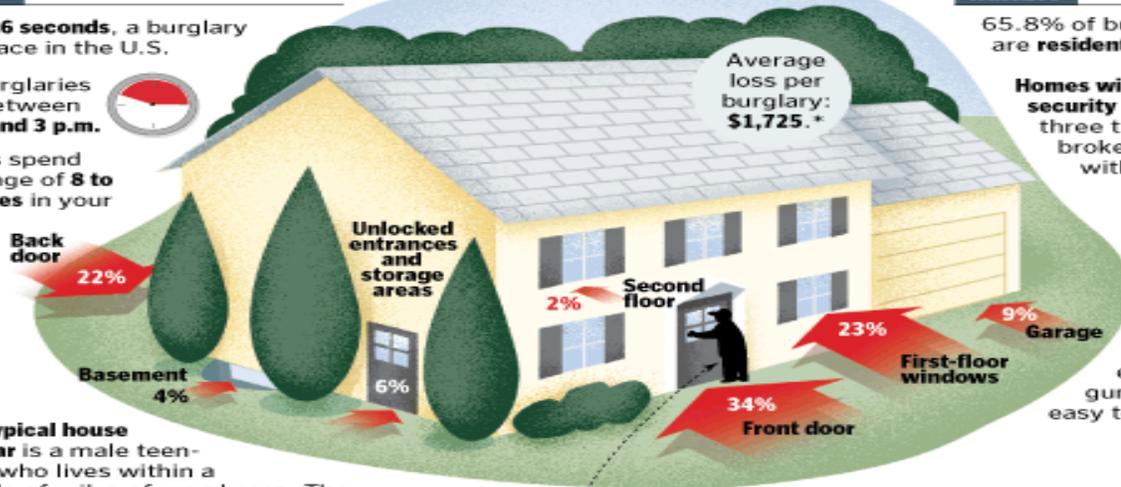
Every 14.6 seconds, a burglary takes place in the U.S.

Most burglaries occur between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Burglars spend an average of 8 to 12 minutes in your home.

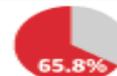


WHERE THIEVES GAIN ENTRY



TARGETS

65.8% of burglaries are residential.



Homes without security systems are about three times as likely to be broken into than homes with security systems.

First stop: Usually the master bedroom because most people keep their valuables there.

Favorite items: Cash, jewelry, electronic equipment, silver, guns and other items easy to sell.

The typical house burglar is a male teenager who lives within a couple of miles of your home. The chance of being victimized by a professional thief is low.

PRECAUTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

Burglars search for homes that appear to be unoccupied. A car in the driveway, motion-sensitive exterior lights, interior lights, and radios and TVs on timers all give the impression that someone is in the home. Stop newspaper and mail delivery, and have neighbors watch your home.

Burglars want to spend no more than 60 seconds breaking into a home. Measures that raise this time — deadbolt locks, bars on windows, and pins in sash windows — might change a burglar's mind.

Don't give burglars any help. Clear shrubs and trees around your home. Don't give burglars a place to hide. Secure tool sheds and ladders. Some thieves will steal tools from around your property and use them to break windows and doors.