



COMMUNITY ALERT

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WEST LOS ANGELES AREA CRIME ANALYSIS DETAIL



BURGLARY

DISTRACTION THIEVES TARGETING THE ELDERLY

TEAMS OF DISTRACTION THIEVES HAVE RECENTLY BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN THE WLA AREA. THESE TEAMS INCLUDE MEN, WOMEN, AND SOMETIMES CHILDREN, IN VARIOUS COMBINATIONS. THESE GROUPS WILL APPROACH ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THEIR HOMES. THEY USE BOGUS EXCUSES TO GET INTO THE HOUSE, DISTRACT THE RESIDENTS AND TAKE MONEY AND JEWELRY.

PLEASE BECOME AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS USED BY THE THIEVES TO GAIN ACCESS TO HOMES IN YOUR AREA. IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY INDIVIDUALS TRYING TO GAIN ENTRY TO YOUR HOME, OR REQUESTING YOU TO EXIT YOUR RESIDENCE FOR SUSPICIOUS REASONS, REFUSE TO COOPERATE, AND CALL THE POLICE.

- #1. THE TEAM WILL CLAIM THAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR THEIR CAT THAT “**MAY BE IN YOUR BACKYARD**”. THEY WILL ASK YOU TO HELP THEM LOOK FOR THEIR CAT. WHEN YOU ARE OUTSIDE, A SECOND PERSON WILL ENTER THE HOUSE AND TAKE MONEY OR JEWELRY.
- #2. THE TEAM WILL TELL YOU THAT THEY WORK FOR A **UTILITY COMPANY (DWP OR GAS COMPANY)**. THEY WILL INDICATE THAT THERE IS A PROBLEM IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD THAT NEEDS REPAIR. YOU MAY BE ASKED TO ASSIST THEM. WHILE YOU ARE HELPING THEM, A SECOND TEAM MEMBER WILL ENTER YOUR HOME WITH THE INTENT TO BURGLARIZE.
- #3. THE TEAM WILL APPROACH YOU AND CLAIM THEY ARE A **CURRENT OR FORMER NEIGHBOR**. THEY WILL ASK TO BE INVITED INTO YOUR HOME. ONCE INSIDE, THEY WILL DISTRACT YOU BY ASKING FOR A GLASS OF WATER. WHILE YOU ARE OUT OF THE ROOM, A TEAM MEMBER WILL RANSACK THE HOME LOOKING FOR MONEY AND JEWELRY.
- #4. THE TEAM WILL APPROACH YOU AND **CLAIM TO HAVE COMPLETED HOME REPAIRS (YOU DID NOT CONTRACT FOR)** OR THEY WILL **OFFER TO DO HOME REPAIRS SUCH AS ROOFING, FENCE REPAIR, OR TREE TRIMMING**. THEY MAY ASK YOU TO STEP OUTSIDE TO DISCUSS WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE (THEY MAY ASK FOR CASH UP FRONT). IN THIS WAY, THEY WILL DISTRACT YOU IN ORDER TO SEARCH YOUR HOME FOR MONEY OR JEWELRY.
- #5. THE TEAM WILL APPROACH YOU AND **CLAIM TO BE CAL TRANS WORKERS** OR OTHERWISE CLAIM TO HAVE REASONS TO TRIM THE BRUSH IN YOUR REAR YARD.

POSSIBLE SUSPECTS IN YOUR AREA



IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY ANYONE OFFERING ANY OF THE ABOVE SCENARIOS, PLEASE CALL 911 AND REFER TO THIS BULLETIN TO HAVE A POLICE UNIT DISPATCHED. ALL SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE WLA BURGLARY UNIT DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS AT (310) 444-1580. FOR DETAILED BURGLARY PREVENTION HANDOUTS, PLEASE LOG ON TO WWW.LAPDONLINE.ORG.