

# Neighborhood Watch Newsletter



Volume 18 Issue 3

May - June 2010

## SUMMERTIME RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY



Burglary is one of the most preventable crimes. By taking a few simple precautions, you can dramatically reduce your risks of falling victim to this crime.

With the onset of warmer weather, many residents open windows and garage doors to ventilate their homes. However, leaving windows and garage doors open and unattended provides a would-be thief with the opportunity to inventory your belongings for future reference, or even gain access to your home. The average burglar will spend no more than four to five minutes trying to break into a residence. An open window or door provides a burglar with direct access in a few seconds.

Many thieves are capable of stealing property in a very short amount of time. People who are walking or driving by a residence can steal bicycles, lawn care products, tools and other items in a matter of seconds. Even worse, a burglar could enter a garage, close the door and have more than enough time to pry open the inner door to a residence while remaining hidden from the street.

Shrubbery also provides a burglar with a place to hide and should never block the view of your exterior doors or windows.

We stress the need for a constant homeowner presence when any exterior doors are open. If you need to ventilate your garage, remain inside of the garage or in the front yard where activities can be monitored.

Even when owners have been in the backyard, there have been incidents where perpetrators entered the garage to steal items. Make it a point to properly close your garage door if you are not planning on maintaining visual contact with the front of your house. If you see that your neighbor's garage door is open, try to contact them and pass on this important message. If you are unable to contact them, be a vigilant neighbor and keep an eye on their property. This will help prevent opportunistic would-be thieves from being converted into spontaneous criminals.

Do not hesitate to make eye contact with anyone you suspect may be "casing" your property. This makes burglars extremely uncomfortable. If you see a suspicious individual, call the Westminster Police Department immediately at (714) 898-3315. Remember, it takes less time to open a window and cool down a home after you have returned to your residence than it does to replace all of your stolen property. 

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### *Westminster Police Department*

8200 Westminster Blvd.  
Westminster, CA 92683  
**Emergencies Call 911**

Business Line:  
714-898-3315

Dispatch Ext: 3212  
Traffic Division Ext. 3220  
Records Bureau Ext. 3218

**Business Hours:**  
Sunday- Saturday  
7:00a.m. – 7:00p.m.  
Website:  
[www.westminster-  
ca.gov/depts/police](http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/police)

## Alarm Permit Requirement

The Westminster Police Department responded to approximately 9,575 alarm calls from 2006 to 2009. Of these, only 239 calls (or 2%) were true alarm calls, while the balance was "false alarms".

***Studies have consistently shown that 98% of the alarms that police respond to are false.***

Responding to false alarms consumes valuable police resources and unnecessarily prevents, delays, or diverts police officers from responding to essential calls for service and other community needs. In order to reduce the number of false alarms and preserve police resources, Ordinance No. 2460 was adopted. Effective April 25, 2010, anyone in Westminster with a building alarm system, including a residential alarm, will need to obtain a permit from the City. The permit will register your alarm, provide information about the building owner such as emergency contact information, and ensure quality service from the City. However, for those owners with alarms which regularly malfunction and send a false alarm of for systems not registered with the City, the City may impose a penalty up to \$500.

***Note: The permit requirement applies to both monitored and non-monitored systems.***

For more information or to obtain an alarm permit application, please refer to the Alarm Ordinance section of the City's website or call 714-548-3202, ext 6.

## Summer Fire Safety

Every year Americans look forward to summer vacations, camping, family reunions, picnics, and the Fourth of July. Summertime, however, also



brings fires and injuries due to fireworks and outdoor grills. Annually just fewer than 10,000 Americans are injured by fireworks and almost 5,000 are injured by charcoal/wood-burning and

propane grill fires. In 2007, 64% of fireworks injuries occurred between June 22 and July 22.

Families also enjoy camping in the summer. It is important to follow the park's rules for the use and extinguishing of campfires. Summertime should be a time for fun and making happy memories. Knowing a few fire safety tips and following instructions will help everyone have a safe summer.

## Campfire Safety

- Build campfires where they will not spread, away from dry grass and leaves.
- Keep campfires small, and don't let them get out of hand.
- Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Stir it and douse it again with water.
- Never leave campfires unattended.

## Barbecue Safety

- Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line. Make sure the venturi tubes - where the air and gas mix - are not blocked.
- Do not overfill the propane tank.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking at a barbecue.
- Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire because the flames can flashback up into the container and explode.
- Dispose of hot coals properly - douse them with plenty of water, and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.
- Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas - carbon monoxide could be produced.

## Fireworks Safety

- The best way to enjoy fireworks is to visit public fireworks displays put on by professionals who know how to safely handle fireworks.
- If you plan to use fireworks, make sure they are legal in your area. Never light fireworks indoors or near dry grass.
- Always have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby. Know how to operate the fire extinguisher properly.
- Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.
- Stand several feet away from lit fireworks. If a device does not go off, do not stand over it to investigate it. Put it out with water and dispose of it.
- Always read the directions and warning labels on fireworks. If a device is not marked with the contents, direction and a warning label, do not light it.
- Supervise children around fireworks at all times. 🚫

## SOLVING BARKING DOG PROBLEMS

*Information Courtesy of The Humane Society of the United States*

Westminster Police Department frequently receives calls from frustrated neighbors regarding barking dogs. If your dog's "talkative nature" has created tension with your neighbors, then it's a good idea to discuss the problem with them. It's perfectly normal and reasonable for dogs to bark from time to time, just as children make noise when they play outside. But continual barking for long periods of time is a symptom of a problem that needs addressing – from the perspectives of your neighbors *and* your dog.

First, determine when and for how long your dog barks and what causes him to bark. Ask your neighbors what they see and hear, drive or walk around the block and watch and listen for a while. With a little effort, you should be able to find out the cause of your dog's barking.

### **Causes of Dog Barking**

- Social isolation / frustration/ attention seeking
- Territorial/ protective behavior
- Fears and phobias
- Separation anxiety



### **Recommendations**

- Take a dog training class with your dog. This allows you and your dog to work together toward a common goal. To help fill the hours that you're not home, provide safe, interesting toys to keep your dog busy, such as toys filled with treats or busy –box toys. Let your neighbors know that you are actively working on the problem.
- Teach your dog a "quiet" command. Teach your dog to identify people who are friends. Consider having your dog spayed or neutered to decrease territorial behavior.
- Identify what's frightening your dog and desensitize him to it. You may need professional help with the desensitization process.
- Some cases of separation anxiety can be resolved using counter conditioning and desensitization.
- Stimulate your dog. Make sure your dog is getting sufficient physical and mental exercise every day. A tired dog is a good dog and one who is less likely to bark from boredom or frustration. Depending on his breed, age, and health, your dog may require several long walks as well as a good game of chasing the ball and playing with some interactive toys. 🐾

### **REMINDER:**

All issues of the Neighborhood Watch Newsletter are available online at:  
<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/depts/police/community>

## City of Westminster Department Directory

Animal Control:  
714-548-3201

Chamber of Commerce:  
714-898-9648

City Hall:  
714-548-4000

Code Enforcement:  
714-548-3246

Fair Housing  
Department:  
714-569-0823

Family Resource  
Center:  
714-903-1331

Graffiti Hotline:  
714-548-3253

Midway City Sanitary  
District  
714-893-3553

Health Department:  
714-677-3600

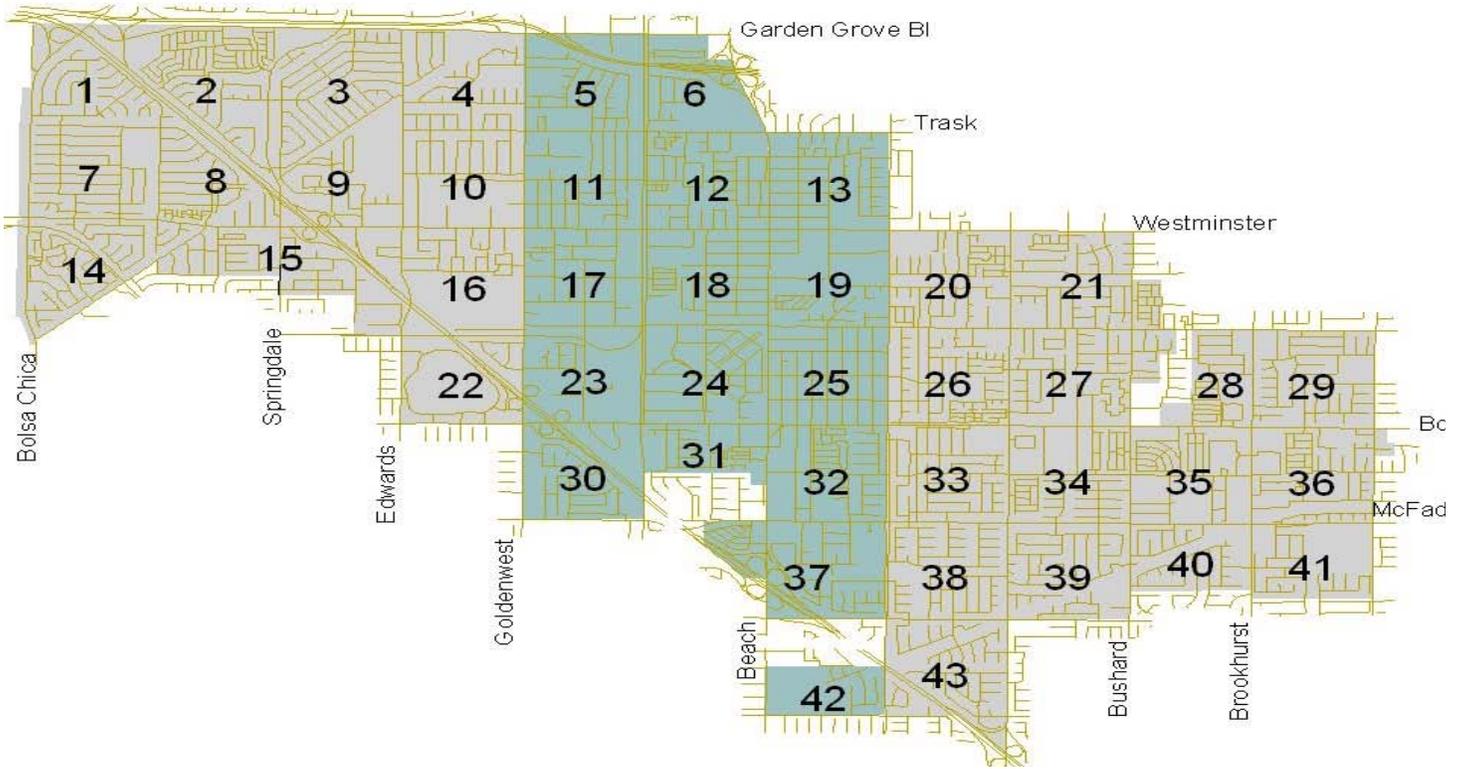
West Justice Center:  
714-896-7111

Recruitment:  
714-548-3202

Westminster Senior  
Center:  
714-895-2878

Vector Control:  
714-971-2421

# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER



## RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

AREA	MAR	APRIL	YTD	LAST YEAR	AREA	MAR	APRIL	YTD	LAST YEAR	AREA	MAR	APRIL	YTD	LAST YEAR
1	0	0	0	1	16	0	0	1	1	31	1	0	1	0
2	1	1	2	1	17	0	2	3	1	32	0	0	0	0
3	2	1	5	3	18	0	0	4	1	33	3	0	4	3
4	1	0	2	3	19	1	0	1	0	34	1	0	2	0
5	0	3	4	0	20	2	1	6	2	35	2	0	5	3
6	0	3	4	0	21	0	0	3	3	36	2	0	4	2
7	0	0	1	2	22	0	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	1
8	0	0	0	2	23	0	0	0	0	38	1	1	2	0
9	1	0	1	1	24	0	0	0	0	39	1	1	3	3
10	2	2	7	3	25	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	1
11	0	1	2	2	26	1	0	1	0	41	0	0	1	1
12	2	0	4	2	27	3	0	7	1	42	0	0	0	0
13	0	1	1	2	28	2	0	3	2	43	0	0	1	1
14	0	0	1	3	29	1	0	1	1					
15	2	0	2	0	30	0	0	0	2					

	MAR	APRIL	YTD
<b>TOTAL BURGLARIES</b>	32	17	89

**This newsletter is published bimonthly. It is compiled and edited by Ja'Nelle Belton, WPD Police Service Officer- Community Relations.**