

# Neighborhood Watch Newsletter



Volume 19 Issue 2

March - April 2011

## BACK TO THE BASICS

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### What is a Neighborhood Watch?

It is first a willingness to keep one's eyes open and report any suspicious activities (a person loitering, a strange car backed up to your neighbor's garage, etc.) Second, it is marking your valuables (i.e. televisions, stereos, etc.) engrave them with identifiers specific to you. Third, it is suggested that you add to your security of your home deadbolt locks or a security alarm system if appropriate.

### What Neighborhood Watch is not!

It is not a group of vigilantes-no citizen arrests.

### How do I profit from a Neighborhood Watch?

It is a no-cost way to simply add to your personal safety and the security of your valuables. Neighborhood Watch signs at the entrance of your subdivision tell criminals that your neighborhood is more concerned about crime and safety than the subdivision up the road. Neighborhood Watch window decals tell thieves your valuables have been marked for identification and persecution.

### **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)

### Do's & Don'ts of Neighborhood Watch

#### Do...

- Report suspicious activity immediately to the police, not the Neighborhood Watch coordinator.
- Report all crimes to the police.
- Learn what's normal in your neighborhood.
- Encourage others to participate in being alert and reporting suspicious activities.
- Obtain full descriptions and license numbers of suspicious people and their vehicles and report immediately to the police.

#### Don't...

- Don't take the law into your own hands.
- Don't approach suspicious people.
- Don't take unnecessary risks to obtain information on suspicious people or crimes.
- Don't hesitate to call police.

## NEW AND REVIVED TRENDS IN SCAMMING

Crime prevention begins at home – with each of us. In order to avoid being a victim, we all need to follow safe practices daily and be aware and alert of the ever changing world around us. Criminals never take a break and one area that they are always trying to find a way to get over on people and one way of doing it is through scamming. Scamming comes in many different forms – emails, phone calls, and mail – and no one is excluded. The elderly are often the most vulnerable victims. This is why National Crime Prevention Council believes it is so important to be informed and to pass this information on to you. Education is the best prevention.

For example, a popular scam that has been around for several years but has recently seen resurgence is the **jury duty scam**. This scam involves a person who calls and claims to be an officer of the court or some kind of jury coordinator who to inform you that you missed jury duty and there is a warrant out for your arrest. Your natural reaction would be to say you never received a summons. The scammer will offer to clear up the matter if you provide your social security number and date of birth.

***Crime Prevention Tip: Never give out personal information when you receive an unsolicited phone call.***

Another scam alert involves users of Gmail. Those who have a Gmail account may receive an email stating that your account will be suspended due to an overload of unused email accounts in the system. In order to rectify this problem, the scammer wants the Gmail user to respond to the email by verifying the account with personal information (i.e. username, password, date of birth). The scammer states that by not responding to the email, the account will be terminated. The scammer uses scare tactics to force the user to respond to the email.

***Crime Prevention Tip: Beware of email fraud notifications such as these and do not respond to them. Do not open the email and immediately delete.***

### What you can do to avoid becoming a victim:

- Do not give out your personal information unless you initiate the contact or know the person or company with whom you are dealing.
- Avoid opening unknown emails. Know your sender and never provide your personal information like a credit card number or social security number.
- Do not disclose your credit card number to an online vendor unless it is encrypted and the site is secure.
- Do not write your Social Security number or telephone number on checks or credit card receipts.
- Order your credit report at least twice a year and report any mistakes to the credit reporting agency in writing.

There are many tips and tools to help you stay informed. Below are additional websites with resources as well. Remember, the best prevention is education.

[www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)  
[www.consumer.gov](http://www.consumer.gov)  
[www.econsumer.gov](http://www.econsumer.gov)  
[www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org)  
[www.identitytheft.org](http://www.identitytheft.org)  
[www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org)

Information courtesy of Prevention Works

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### Westminster Improving Neighborhoods Program

The purpose of the Westminster Improving Neighborhoods is to assist low-income Westminster homeowners whose income does not exceed 80% of the County median income, as adjusted by family size and income, as calculated on an annual basis California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Program will provide up to \$25,000 of grant assistance for pre-approved work done by an appropriately licensed contractor.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

The program application and guidelines are available on the City of Westminster website at:

<http://www.westminster-ca.gov/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=442&targetid=1>

If you have any further questions, you may call the Housing Division at 714-548-3495 or visit the Housing Division Offices at the Westminster Mall, located in the Macy's Wing.

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### **POLICE DEPARTMENT REMINDER ON CALIFORNIA LAW REGARDING CELL PHONES AND DRIVING**

A law passed by the California Legislature made it an infraction to talk on a cell phone while driving effective July 1, 2008. On January 1, 2009, an additional law was enacted making it an infraction to use any type of electronic wireless communication device to write, read or send text based communications.

Adults are allowed to talk on a hands free cell phone device while driving. Anyone under 18 years old is not allowed any use of a cell phone while driving, not even with a hands free device. No one is allowed to write, read or send text based communications while driving.

The law is stricter on teen drivers because of their lack of experience in driving. Also, teen drivers are more likely to be distracted while driving. The best practice is to turn off a cell phone while in a vehicle. If it is on and rings, do not answer it until you have safely reached your destination. The only allowable exception is to contact law enforcement, the fire department or a health care provider in an emergency situation.

A police officer can stop any motorist seen using a cell phone, or similar device, to issue them a traffic citation. The Westminster Police Department strictly enforces these laws. For more information about the use of electronic wireless communication devices while driving, visit the California DMV webpage at <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/cellularphonelaws/index.htm>.

#### **DID YOU KNOW THAT WESTMINSTER PD IS ON:**



FaceBook



MySpace



Twitter

For updates on community events, job postings and much more join us on the above mentioned social networking sites.

#### **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:  
714-898-3311

Code Enforcement:  
714-893-3311

Fair Housing  
Department:  
714-569-0823

Family Resource  
Center:  
714-903-1331

Graffiti Hotline:  
714-895-2876

Midway City Sanitary  
District  
714-893-3553

Health Department:  
714-677-3600

West Justice Center:  
714-896-7111

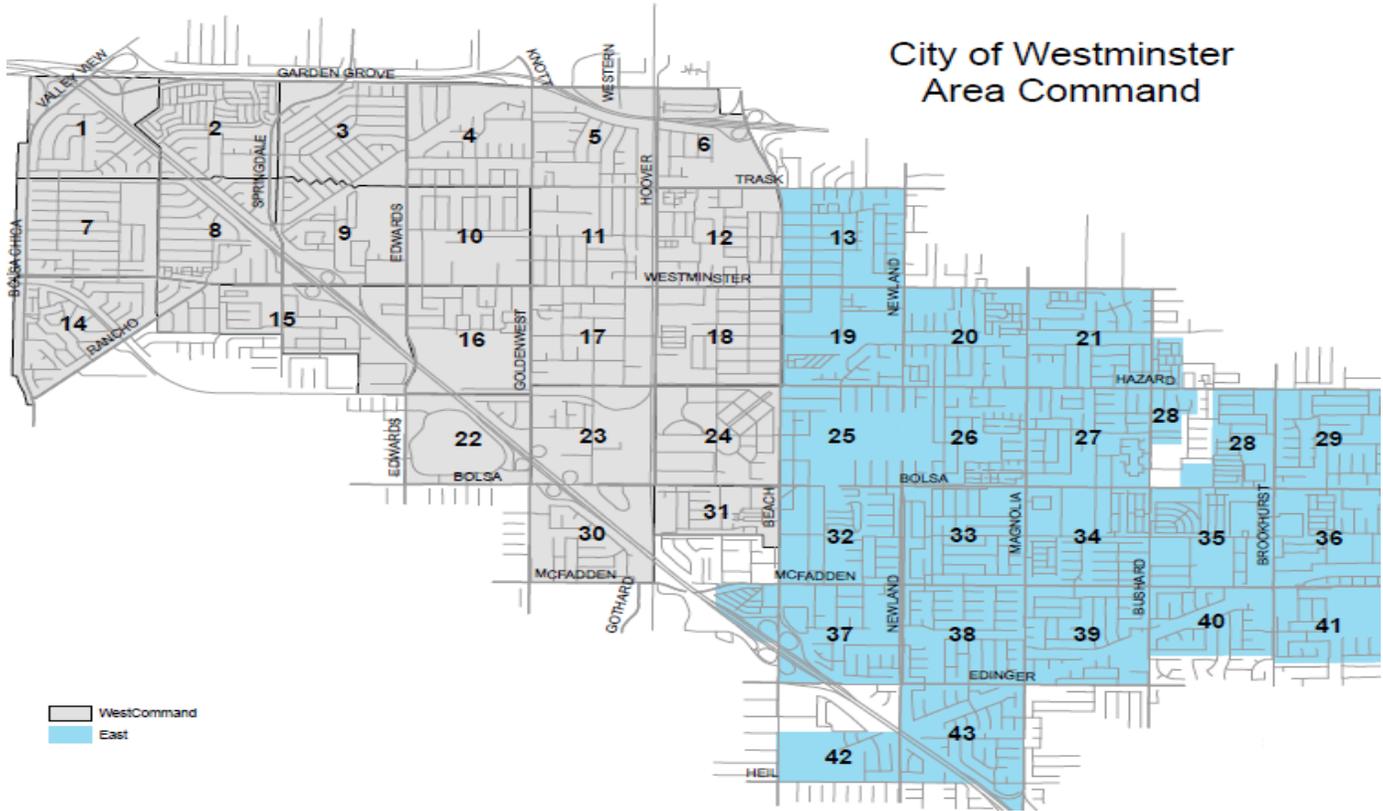
Recruitment:  
714-548-3732

Westminster Senior  
Center:  
714-895-2878

Vector Control:  
714-971-2421

# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

## City of Westminster Area Command



### RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

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

	JAN	FEB	YTD
<b>TOTAL BURGLARIES</b>	27	22	49

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY.  
IT IS COMPILED AND EDITED  
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