



## ***VAN NUYS SENIOR LEAD OFFICERS' NEWS***

Senior Lead Officers Unit  
6240 Sylmar Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91401

January 2025

# GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**If you are interested in becoming a Block Captain and starting a Neighborhood Watch Program in your neighborhood, please call your Senior Lead Officer at the numbers listed below for further details.**

### **Help Us PREVENT TERRORISM - "See Something, Report to iWATCH"**

iWatch is a community program and partnership between the public and Los Angeles Police Department. The program educates the community regarding possible acts of terrorism by teaching them about behaviors and activities that appear unusual and/or seem to be out of the ordinary, makes them aware of important places to watch, and informs them on key details that should be included as part of the reporting process.

There are three platforms for public reporting:

1. iWATCH mobile application
2. Online through LAPDonline.org or iWATCHLA.org
3. 1-877-A-THREAT (1-877-284-7328)

### **For crimes in progress and medical emergencies dial: 911**

To report any suspicious activity or person(s), call the Los Angeles Police Department Non-Emergency phone number at 877-ASK-LAPD (877-275-5273).

Are you interested in knowing about spontaneous police activity in your neighborhood? If so, you may want to try the "Citizen app." Get real-time safety alerts and live videos of incidents happening near you.

## *Crime Update*

### **Basic Car 9A5**

Senior Lead Officer Brian Franco

Cell Phone: 818-731-2556

Email Address: [39273@lapd.online](mailto:39273@lapd.online)

Happy New Year to all. Basic Car 9A5 Officer Brian Franco here. Let's start the new year off right. Here are some basic personal safety tips to keep in mind this year so we can all stay safe.

These tips can help you avoid becoming a victim of a crime when you are out and about or at work. By taking a few simple precautions, you can reduce the risk to yourself, and discourage those who commit crime.

#### Street precautions

- **Keep an eye on your surroundings** and the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark. If you see anyone acting suspiciously, avoid them by crossing the street, entering an open store, or changing your route. Call the police if you believe you are being stalked.
- **Don't walk alone**, especially at night or in areas that are not well lit. Whenever possible, travel with a friend. Stay in well-lit, populated areas as much as possible. Make sure a friend or family member knows where you are going when you go out.
- **Don't get caught up in your routine.** Even on trips you make often, stay alert and keep an eye out for people or vehicles that seem strange.
- **Remove distractions.** Talking on the phone, listening to music, or looking up directions may prevent you from being able to stay aware of your surroundings. If you need to access your phone, wait until you're somewhere safe and well lit.
- **Avoid potential hiding spots**, like bushes, alleys, and doorways. Walk close to the curb. Do not use alleys or shortcuts or cross vacant fields.
- **Do not respond to conversation from strangers** on the street; continue walking. Do not accept any hugs or gifts from a person you don't know.
- **Protect your belongings.** If you carry a purse, hold it securely between your arm and your body, and not around your neck. Consider carrying a dummy wallet and/or purse. Limit the number of personal valuables you carry.
- **Wear reflective clothing** so that drivers can see you as you cross the street.

#### Car Safety

- **Lock your doors** immediately after entering or leaving your car.
- **Park in safe areas**, making sure there is adequate lighting and that your car is in public view. When you park, look around for suspicious persons or vehicles near your car.
- **Don't carry too many things in your arms** going to and from the vehicle.
- **Have your car keys in your hand** so you don't have to linger before entering your car.
- **Check the back seat** before entering your car.
- **Don't linger in your car** (reading, eating, napping, etc.).
- **Don't leave any valuables inside the vehicle**, including cell phones and GPS devices.
- **If you think you are being followed**, drive to a public place or a police, sheriff or fire station.
- **If your car breaks down**, open the hood and attach a white cloth to the car antenna. If someone stops to help, stay in the locked car, roll down the window a little and ask them to call the police or sheriff or a tow trucking service.

#### Waiting for a bus

- Avoid isolated bus stops.
- Stand away from the curb until the bus arrives.
- Don't open your purse or wallet while boarding the bus. Have your pass or money already in your hand.

- Keep gold chains out of sight; don't flash your jewelry; and turn your rings around so the stones don't show.

#### On the bus

- During off hours, sit as close to the bus driver as possible.
- Stay alert and be aware of the people around you.
- If someone bothers you, change seats, and/or tell the driver.
- Carry your wallet inside your coat, or in a front pocket. A comb, placed horizontally in the fold of your wallet, will alert you if someone tries to remove it from your pocket.
- Keep your handbag in front of you and hold it close to your body with both hands.
- If you see any suspicious activity, tell the driver.

#### Office security

- Mark personal property with your Last Name and First Initial of your First Name (preceded with the letters "CA").
- Don't leave cash or valuables at the office.
- If you work alone or before/after normal business hours, keep the office door locked.
- If you work late, try to find another worker or a security guard to walk you to your car.
- If you must work late by yourself, let someone know and call them when you leave.
- If you are in the elevator with another person, stand near the control panel. If you are attacked, press the alarm and as many of the control buttons as possible.
- Be aware of persons loitering near the business or parking lot.

#### **Basic Car 9A19**

Senior Lead Officer Mike Perez

Cell Phone: 818-731-2566

Email Address: [35569@lapd.online](mailto:35569@lapd.online)

Happy New Year residents and business owners of Basic Car 9A19! I look forward to working with you in the new year, combating incidents and fear of crime in our neighborhoods and in our community.

**Street Vendors:** In 2024 as a Division, we saw an increase of street vendors selling food and merchandise on city sidewalks and parks. Currently, it is not illegal to sell food or merchandise if vendors have the proper permits. Los Angeles Municipal Code 41.13 provides guidelines for sidewalk and park vending in the City of Los Angeles. If the guidelines are not followed vendors can be cited on an Administrative Enforcement Citation (ACE) under section 41.13D LAMC. Fines for these violations range from \$250-\$1,000. Below are some of the requirements for vendors:

- Must comply with the Los Angeles County Health Department.
- Responsible for clean-up and removal of waste.
- Prohibited from hooking up water, electrical, or gas outlets for sale of food or merchandise.
- Must display all permits in a viable area.
- No vending is allowed when the park is closed.
- Are prohibited from placing any liquid or solid waste in park trash cans.

Additionally, if a vendor is selling food the following permits are required:

- BTRC-Business Tax Registration Certificate (LA City)
- LA County Health Permit
- California Department of tax and Fees Sellers Permit
- City of Los Angeles Sidewalk Vending Permit

If you would like for information about street vending or how to obtain the required permits please visit <https://streetsla.org/vending> or call 213-847-6000.

**Community Clean-ups:** Our next community clean up is scheduled for January 11, 2025. Time and location TBD. If you are interested in participating, please email me at [35569@lapd.online](mailto:35569@lapd.online).

**Neighborhood Watch!** An involved community is an informed community. If you are interested in participating in a traditional Neighborhood Watch meeting or to restart an existing one, please email me.

### **Basic Car 9A23**

Senior Lead Officer George Lara

Cell Phone: (818) 731-2557

E-mail: [38454@lapd.online](mailto:38454@lapd.online)

Hello everyone and Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season with your loved ones and that you have taken some time to reflect and build upon your successes. I hope you have a wonderful new year full of health and prosperity.

I wanted to take a moment and talk about one of my biggest challenges from last year, homelessness. Homelessness is not a crime, but unfortunately our homeless population does have a contributing factor to certain crimes in our area whether as victims or suspects of these. Our mission here at the Los Angeles Police Department is to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve, to reduce the incidence of and fear of crime, and to enhance public safety while working with the diverse communities to improve their quality of life.

Having said that, please help me identify some of these issues that would allow us to provide resources, help those in need and improve everyone's quality of life while continuing to reduce crime. One way you can do that is by reporting homeless encampments using the 311 App on your smart phone or calling our non-emergency line to request the City's CIRCLE Team.

This will prompt the City of Los Angeles to locate the encampment or people experiencing homelessness and send proper resources to address the issue. This is also helpful for removal of bulky items and abandoned property on sidewalks as well as properly sanitizing that area.

If you see that there is an empty property that is being overtaken with trespassers, please contact me. It would really help me out if you can provide me with a point of contact with a responsible party for that property.

Remember that most of the property crimes in our area are crimes of opportunity, please continue to secure your bicycles inside your residence or in a well-lit area. Lock your cars and PLEASE hide your valuables from plain sight. Lock It!, Hide It! Keep It! is a very effective way of not being a victim of a car break in.

If you would like to schedule a meeting, please feel free to contact me. I am always open and available to meet. To all my business owners and managers in the area, feel free to call or e-mail so we can discuss the possibility of starting a Business Watch Group in your area.

As a reminder, I am available via e-mail, text and phone calls, however please consider that I am not always on duty. If you have an emergency or in need of immediate police assistance, please call 911 or the LAPD Non-emergency number at (877) 275-5273.

**Basic Car 9A37**

Senior Lead Officer Kristan Delatori

Cell Phone: (818) 731-2562

Email Address: [32914@lapd.online](mailto:32914@lapd.online)

Happy 2025! Hope everyone had a beautiful holiday season. It is during this time of year we reflect on the previous year and think about what we want to continue to work on and what we want to do differently. It is a perfect time to not only clean out your real closets and drawers but our proverbial ones as well. I would like to suggest as you do both be conscientious in how you think about the safety and security in your home and when you are traveling through your every day tasks.

Neighborhood Watch, Block Watch, Town Watch, Crime Watch – whatever the name, it's one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime and reduce fear in your neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch Programs fight the isolation and separation that crime creates and feeds upon. It forges bonds among area residents and businesses, helps reduce burglaries and robberies, and improves relations between police and the communities they serve.

Many people are concerned about the threat of rising crime in their communities. Fortunately, there are ways to help protect your home and your neighborhood from crime. Work with your neighbors to keep your neighborhood clean and orderly. Set timers on lights when you're away from home or your business is closed, so they appear to be occupied. Illuminate or eliminate places an intruder might hide: the spaces between trees or shrubs, stairwells, alleys, hallways, and entry ways. If you are interested in starting or joining a neighborhood watch group, please email me with your contact information. Thank you for your continued support of the Officers here at Van Nuys Division!

*For more information and safety tips please visit [LAPD.ORG](http://LAPD.ORG)*

**Basic Car 9A41**

Senior Lead Officer Joel Gutierrez

Cell Phone: 818-731-2560

Email Address: [36816@lapd.online](mailto:36816@lapd.online)

Hello basic car 9A41, Happy New Year! Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, healthy and prosperous 2025! As we continue into the new year, please stay vigilant and properly secure your homes as it relates to closing and locking windows at night. With this said, please continue to stay alert and report suspicious activity as it relates to residential burglary. If possible, the utilization of a ring type video surveillance system for your residence is always a good deterrent. The more layers of deterrent towards hardening the target of your residence, helps to reduce your chances of being victimized. Please continue to stay involved with a Neighborhood Watch Program and get to know your neighbors.

Lastly, I like to take a moment to speak about our unhoused neighbors in our basic car area. I make a daily effort to reach out to People Experiencing Homelessness by conducting foot beats and discussing their needs. I provide specific resources to fit each one's individual needs through LAHSA, and Urban Alchemy CIRCLE team.

I am actively involved in the CARE plus clean-ups and also conduct enforcement when needed. As your Senior Lead Officer, I use the following resources and you, as community members, can too. Be part of the solution.

- Homeless Outreach Portal LA-Hop fill out an outreach request form at: [www.lacounty.gov/lahop](http://www.lacounty.gov/lahop)
- Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority, website [www.lahsa.org](http://www.lahsa.org)
- MyLA311 App

### **Basic Car 9A63**

Senior Lead Officer Mariana Romo

Cell Phone: 818-731-2563

Email Address: [40229@lapd.online](mailto:40229@lapd.online)

Happy New Year Sherman Oaks! Hope everyone is enjoying this holiday season. I am seeing more and more vacant homes in the neighborhood. When vacant homes are unkept, the property becomes a magnet to criminals.

Advise your Senior Lead Officer of the property. An extra patrol request will be submitted.

- Work with each other as neighbors to monitor the property.
- Report any broken windows, doors, and suspicious activity with the police.
- Some of these homes are by your neighborhood schools. Educate your child that it is not okay to go into abandoned homes.
- Contact Building & Safety at 818-374-4300 to flag this location.

We want everyone to drive responsibly and avoid becoming another statistic by being arrested for driving under the influence. We urge the public to not get behind the wheel and drive if you become intoxicated or consume any type of drug.

- If you are going out, have a plan!
- Use public transportation or other means to get to your destination.
- It is NOT worth it!

Looking for an opportunity to work with the police? Become a volunteer! For information, contact Officer Jimenez from the Community Relations Office at 818-375-5420 or email at [38903@lapd.online](mailto:38903@lapd.online).

Please remember these important phone numbers for Non-Emergency police response: 1-877-275-5273 (1-877-ASK-LAPD) or 9-1-1 for police, fire or medical emergency.

### **Basic Car 9A89**

Senior Lead Officer Jose Saldana

Cell Phone: 818-731-2565

Email Address: [30853@lapd.online](mailto:30853@lapd.online)

Basic Car 9A89 covers the southern portion of Sherman Oaks and a small portion of Studio City.

Happy New Year to all!

Here are some tips for making New Year's resolutions:

- **Make SMART resolutions:** Make resolutions that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. This can help you feel a sense of success and avoid avoiding similar resolutions in the future.
- **Write down your goals:** Writing down your goals can help you stay motivated. You can keep your goals somewhere you'll see them often, like on the fridge or next to your bed.
- **Break big goals into smaller ones:** It can be easier to achieve smaller goals than big ones.
- **Drink more water:** Drinking more water can help with your skin, diet, and recovery after a workout.
- **Keep a journal:** Journaling can help with stress, anxiety, and depression.
- **Prioritize mental health:** You can try meditating or exercising to improve your mental well-being.
- **Focus on physical fitness:** You can try working out daily to discover new strengths in your body.
- **Follow a healthy diet:** You can try eating a balanced diet every day.

Some other New Year's resolution ideas include spending time with family.

## *Crime Prevention Tips*

- ***IF YOU'RE HOME AND SOMEONE KNOCKS OR RINGS YOUR DOORBELL, DO NOT IGNORE IT.*** Would be burglars like to knock to determine if someone is home before attempting to break in. So, please make sure you verbally acknowledge the person without opening the door. If you have not invited someone to your home, you should not open the door for them.
- ***SECURITY AND/OR DOOR BELL SYSTEMS WITH VIDEO*** are becoming an affordable option to help reduce your chances of becoming a victim. Please consider these options to protect your home.
- ***DON'T LEAVE YOUR KEYS IN YOUR VEHICLES.*** Whether you are tandem parked, parked in a garage, or just going inside for a moment (i.e. gas station, your home, etc.), do not leave your keys in your vehicles.
- ***STEERING WHEEL LOCKS.*** 1990's Toyota's and Honda's are some of the most common vehicles stolen. These vehicles have door locks and ignitions that are easily compromised. Steering wheel locks are good tools to assist in deterring criminals from taking these vehicles.
- ***LOCK YOUR CAR AND PARK IT IN A GARAGE OR LIGHTED AREA.*** Make it difficult to get into your car. If it is outside, make your car as visible as possible. Do not leave anything valuable or visible in your vehicles.
- ***LOCK YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS*** when you leave the house. Close your blinds/drapes so no one can see into your house. Keep every part of your residence locked and secured, including your garage. Strategic lighting can also assist with crime prevention.
- ***DON'T LEAVE EXPENSIVE ITEMS OUT,*** place them in a drawer, safe, or somewhere else out of sight.
- ***TAKE YOUR ELECTRONIC ITEMS OUT OF YOUR CAR,*** this includes your cell phones, computer tablets, other portable electronics, and chargers.
- ***SHOPPING CART.*** Do not leave your purses in the shopping cart while loading your vehicles.