



VAN NUYS SENIOR LEAD OFFICERS' NEWS

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

December 2023



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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

Officer Matt Anderson

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Happy Holidays to the community members in Basic Car 9A5. My name is Matt Anderson, and I am your interim senior lead officer. I have had the pleasure of speaking with some of you in my first couple of days, and I am looking forward to working with you all. Please utilize my contact information above as necessary so I can better address your community concerns.

I have already responded to some locations in the Basic Car area suffering from homeless encampments and bulk item trash. Utilizing the MY LA 311 is a resource of mine that I highly recommend you all use as well as needed. It is easy to use. Should you have any issues or concerns with any of these needs, please do not hesitate to contact me so that I may assist you.

We have a 6.90% increase in theft crimes year to date from last year. This is a result of retail and personal items being taken. There is only a thin piece of glass separating criminals from property left in your vehicles, so please remember to remove your personal property from your locked / secured vehicles. Also, make sure all your doors windows, and other access points into your homes are secured when you are away. This includes your rear doors and windows. If you have a security system, then please utilize it. If you do not have a security system, I highly recommend you research available services as there are many affordable options that are easy to install. Rule of thumb: **LOCK IT, HIDE IT, KEEP IT!**

During the holidays, many of us have multiple packages coming to our doorsteps. To prevent your packages from being taken, attempt to have packages routed to a pick-up site or communicate with neighbors to have your packages secured when you are away during deliveries. It is best to be diligent retrieving your packages as they arrive if possible.

Violent crime is also up 26.83% year to date from last year. If you see something, say something. If incidents are not reported to the police, then the police are unaware of the new or ongoing crimes in your area. Ensure that you are always aware of your surroundings, and that you try to utilize the "buddy system" for those early morning, or late-night walks.

As many of us are looking forward to celebrate the approaching holidays, please be aware that it is also that time of year where people drink alcohol beyond their limits. People may not recognize that critical decision-making abilities and driving-related skills are already diminished long before they show overt signs of intoxication. Please drink responsibly and remember to use one of the many Rideshare services available!

Basic Car 9A19

Senior Lead Officer Mike Perez

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Greetings and Happy Holidays! I would first like to extend to you and your family a happy, safe and healthy holiday season.

This month Basic CaA19 has seen a significant increase in commercial and residential burglaries. There were three commercial burglaries and eight residential burglaries mostly occurring in the early evening hours. The burglaries are mostly occurring during early evening hours and during this incidents jewelry, cash and handbags were taken. In one incident suspects fired at the victims with a handgun to avoid being followed. To avoid being a victim of a residential burglary follow these suggestions:

- Lock and secure your home before leaving.
- Install a security system with cameras.
- Install motion sensor lights.
- Install proper lighting.
- Lock side gates and rear doors.
- Place valuables (cash jewelry, cash, firearms) in a security safe that is bolted into the floor.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house.
- If out of town ask your neighbor to pick up your mail, packages, and newspapers to lessen the appearance that nobody is home.

Holiday Theft Prevention: As the holidays draw near we will all be spending our hard earn money on gifts and presents for our family and loved ones. Keep these tips in mind to prevent holiday thefts.

- Have packages that are shipped to your home delivered to an area out of plain view of your porch.
- Have packages delivered at secure location (Amazon lockers) rather than your home.
- Pay attention to your surroundings while shopping. Thieves monitor the parking lots of malls and stores for people placing newly bought items in their vehicles.
- At home, make sure all doors and windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.) and use them!
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or are activated by sensors.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed so they do not conceal doors and windows. Remember, overgrown foliage can provide a hiding place for criminals.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.
- Consider safe deposit boxes for coin and stamp collections, seldom-worn jewelry, stock bonds, etc.
- Lock your vehicle and remove all the valuables. Yes, even in your driveway.
- Leaving for the Holidays?
 - Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Neighborhood Watch member to watch your home.
 - Use timers for lights and radios while you're away.
 - Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.

For all **traffic related complaints**, (speeding, stop sign violations, racing, and general traffic issues,) please contact Valley Traffic Officer Evan Urias at 38412@lapd.online. Please specify they type of violations, the area it's occurring and the time of day.

For **abandoned vehicle** complaints call DOT dispatch at 818-374-4823.

For **graffiti, illegal dumping, bulk item removal, street services, animal related services, parks, trees and vegetation, or private property** use the www.myla311.lacity.org to report such requests.

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

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Happy Holidays from your Senior Lead Officer George Lara! I hope everyone is enjoying this holiday season with your loved ones.

After a review of the violent crime statistics in our area, I noticed that most of the incidents were related to people either being under the influence of alcohol, family violence or a combination

In the State of California Family Violence aka Domestic Violence is defined as *“Any person who willfully inflicts upon his or her spouse, or any person who willfully inflicts upon any person with whom he or she is cohabiting, or any person who willfully inflicts upon any person who is the mother or father of his or her child, corporal injury resulting in a traumatic condition is guilty of a felony.”* Domestic Violence includes, but is not limited, to the following circumstances:

- Physical – hitting or burning.
- Sexual – rape or incest.
- Emotional – threatening, insulting or harassing.
- Neglect – poor physical or emotional care.

Incidents of domestic violence often go unreported by victims for the following reasons:

- Victims do not realize they are in a dangerous and violent situation.
- Victims do not recognize the domestic violence signals.
- Victims feel ashamed, hopeless and are in denial.
- Victims sense they have no alternatives.
- Victims sense no one can protect them.
- Victims do not know what victim services are available or how they can obtain the services needed.

Many people still believe in the myth that men are the only people capable of being abusive and women are the only people who suffer abuse. This is not true and sometimes abuse can also come from a parent, sibling or close relative.

An abuser can be anybody from any walk of life. Some abusers have the following traits:

- Does not change.
- Low self-esteem.
- Work related problems.
- Legal problems, fines or prior jail convictions for domestic violence.
- Has witnessed, or may have suffered abuse as children, causing abuse to be taught or a learned behavior.
- Desires power and to be in control.
- Low self-esteem.
- Violence against their victim gives them a sense of importance.
- Drug and/or alcohol problems.
- Mental or emotional problems.
- Abusers make excuses, such as “blaming” the abuse on other people or situations.

This abuse cycle has four phases and it can be helpful to understand them, to help you recognize the pattern of abuse and violence that can occur. This pattern can happen over a day, weeks, months or years. Below is an example of how family and domestic violence may occur.

The **first** step of the cycle is the actual act of abuse, where the abuser metes out some form of violence.

The **second** step is the remorse period, where the abuser is sorry the incident occurred and apologizes for everything that occurred.

The **third** step is the dating period, where the couple is once again happy, and everything seems wonderful. In actuality, the abusers tension level is building.

The **fourth** step is a repeat of the **first** step of the abuse. The cycle continues to repeat itself growing in ferocity each time.

Domestic Violence Prevention Tips

- Watch for personality changes such as more aggressive, violent, moody or accusing behavior.
- Develop a plan of action and instruct your children about the plan.
- Locate a safe house such as the home of a trusted friend, trusted neighbor or family member.
- Locate a safe shelter that is suitable to your needs and accepts children.
- Begin counseling sessions.

If you or suspect someone you know is a victim of Domestic Violence you contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-SAFE (7233) or at www.thehotline.org. Local resources are also available at the Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline (800) 978-3600 or our very own Van Nuys Division Domestic Abuse Response Team at 818-374-0050.

Some Domestic Violence programs can assist you in determining if you are eligible to receive financial compensation for losses or expenses that result from the crime, such as wages, relocation, medical and therapy.

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

Officer Maksym Chernov

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Greetings to residents of Basic Car 9A37. To those who missed October newsletter, I'd like to re-introduce myself as an Interim Senior Lead Officer for your area. I'll be helping Kristan Delatori with watching over her area while she is out of the office. Some of you have reached out and introduced yourself, thank you for that. In case you have not, I'd like to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is anything I can do to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood you live or work.

For this month I would like to update everyone on the extension of the CIRCLE team program to Sherman Oaks area. In case you haven't heard of the program, the CIRCLE is a 24/7 unarmed response program that deploys a team of mental health professionals and individuals with lived experience to address non-violent LAPD calls related to unhoused individuals experiencing crisis. The program already operates in Hollywood, South Los Angeles, downtown L.A. Venice and the San Fernando Valley, according to a release from Bass'

office. Basically, if you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness, you can refer them to myself or to contact CIRCLE, call the non-emergency police line at 877-275-5273.

This time of year, we see increase in burglaries/theft from motor vehicles and residential burglaries. Use common safety tips to “Lock It, Hide It, Keep It” when going shopping.

To protect your home, one of the great strategies that can be used is creating an illusion of an occupied home. Most of burglaries occur when residents are away. The incidents of the burglars entering an occupied house are much rather rare occurrences.

Vast majority of burglars are opportunists and don't want to encounter their target's homeowners. Most will avoid entering homes that have occupancy cues. These include cars in the driveway, lights turned on in the house, a loud television or music, and the absence of mail and packages piling up. A mailbox stuffed with uncollected mail is the Achilles heel of many homes during the holidays, it is common for burglars to look in mailboxes. If they look in your mailbox and can see 3-4 days of mail or see packages on your doorstep, it is a tell-tale sign that someone is out of town and away from their home. If you are going away, have a neighbor or friend pick up your mail and packages (which could also be stolen if they're left out on your porch for several days). Doing this one thing will make burglars at least doubt whether someone might be at home, and they are less likely to try breaking in. Of course, if you can get a friend to house-sit for you and turn on the lights and the TV in the evening, that's even better. If you can't, ask your mail delivery provider to hold your mail at the post office while you're away (this is often called 'vacation hold' or 'holiday hold').

Basic Car 9A41

Senior Lead Officer Joel Gutierrez

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Hello basic car 9A41, Greetings and Happy Holidays! I would first like to extend to you and your family a happy, and healthy holiday season.

Homeless encampments have been a concern for many residents and businesses. I have been working closely and very diligently with the Urban Alchemy CIRCLE team, Sanitation, and the Council Districts Field Deputies. I want to remind everyone that as November 1, 2023 the Crisis and Incident Response Through Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE) team is coming to Sherman Oaks. The Circle Team is a 24/7 unarmed response program that deploys trained teams to address non-urgent LAPD calls related to homeless individuals.

You can contact a CIRCLE team by calling the police non-emergency number 877-ASK-LAPD. The CIRCLE operators deploy trained Response Teams that include a supervisor and an outreach worker who has previous lived experience in homelessness, substance abuse, or incarceration. Team members with lived experience can quickly relate and connect with homeless individuals.

Lastly, as the holidays draw near we will all be spending our hard earn money on gifts and presents for our family and loved ones. Keep these tips in mind to prevent holiday thefts:

- Have packages that are shipped to your home delivered to an area out of plain view of your porch.
- Have packages delivered at secure location (Amazon lockers) rather than your home.
- Pay attention to your surroundings while shopping. Thieves monitor the parking lots of malls and stores for people placing newly bought items in their vehicles.
- Remember to always, **“Lock it, Hide it, Keep it!”**

Basic Car 9A63

Senior Lead Officer Mariana Romo

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Greetings and Happy Holidays!

The holidays are here and would like to remind you of a few crime prevention tips.

If you are shopping at the mall or any retailer...

- Do not leave valuable items in plain view inside of your vehicle. Place them in your trunk or carry along some type of covering (such as a blanket) to cover your packages.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Do not walk and text at the same time.
- Walk with a "purpose". Have your keys ready in your hand before you get to your car.
- Shop with others. Safety in numbers is a deterrent.
- Park your car in a well-lit area and remember where you parked. I always take a picture of the level/section of where I parked. This way I can remind myself of where I left my car.
- Keep your purses and wallets secure on your person and make sure you are always aware of your location.
- Keep your cash at a minimum or separate it into different pockets or locations. This way it is not all in one place.
- Ask for an escort to your car.
- Shopping with kids? Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if separated. Have a plan!

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

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

Please ensure that you lock your car doors and windows, and do not leave any valuables in plain sight. This includes items such as purses, wallets, electronics, and other valuable items. It is best to take these items with you or lock them in the trunk of your car.

If you see suspicious activities, report it to the LAPD non-emergency number at 877-275-5273 (877-ASK-LAPD). Please utilize MYLA311 for debris and/or bulky items that are left on the street/sidewalk.

For information on volunteer opportunities with the LAPD, email Officer Jason Jimenez in the Community Relations Office at 38903@lapd.online, or call (818) 374-5420. Program information, the application process, and current volunteer opportunities will be provided. All applicants are required to be fingerprinted as part of LAPD background procedures.

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.