



VAN NUYS SENIOR LEAD OFFICERS' NEWS

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

March 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

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Basic Car 9A5 Officer Brian Franco here. Recently, I have seen several reports that victims have had their vehicle's broken into or their catalytic converters stolen. Here some helpful tips to hopefully help prevent this type of theft.

Theft from Motor Vehicle:

Theft from motor vehicle is still one of the highest trending property crimes. Therefore, it's crucial to prioritize vehicle security. To help protect your belongings, make it a habit to always lock your vehicle. In addition to taking any valuables, spare keys and your garage door opener out of your vehicle when you park.

Parking:

- Park in well-lit, busy areas
- Park in a garage if you have one
- Park in lots with attendants
- Turn your wheels toward the curb
- Use your emergency brake when you park

Locking:

- Lock your doors and close your windows whenever you leave your car
- Never leave your keys in your car

Other tips:

- Never leave your car running unattended
- Keep your keys on you when you leave your car
- If you have multiple keys, don't leave the spares in your car
- Remove the valet key if your car came with one
- Beware of your surroundings before leaving your vehicle
- Immediately report any suspicious activity to the police

Reminder:

While your tinted windows offer protection from harmful UV rays and some privacy, it doesn't keep the thieves out. Thieves can see right through the tint, with the right flashlight.

Theft of Catalytic Converter:

Thieves target catalytic converters because they contain precious metals, like platinum, palladium or rhodium, that are valuable to metal dealers. Thieves can sell them to scrap yards for up \$200 each. Thieves typically use a saw or wrench to remove it, depending on whether the catalytic converter is bolted or welded in and removal can take as little as one minute. In Van Nuys Division most of the catalytic converters were taken from cars parked on the street for long periods of time. So, understanding when your car might be a target for catalytic converter theft is the first key to preventing it. Also, by following these protective measures, you may help deter thieves from targeting your car.

- When possible, park in well-lit areas and close to building entrances.
- If you have a garage at your house, park your car inside and keep the garage door shut.
- Have the catalytic converter welded to your car's frame, which may make it harder to steal.
- Consider engraving your vehicle identification number (VIN) on the catalytic converter — this may help alert a scrap dealer that it was stolen and make it easier to identify the owner.
- Calibrate your car's alarm to set off when it detects vibration.

- Install a catalytic converter cover such as Cat Security available at your local car dealer.

Thank you for your time, let's stay safe out there.

Basic Car 9A19

Senior Lead Officer Mike Perez

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Greetings residents and business owners of Basic Car 9A19! The month of February 2025 brought a significant increase in the amount of residential burglaries throughout the division. Many of the burglaries occurred during the daytime hours and burglars used Wi-Fi jamming equipment to disable alarm systems. Please use these burglary prevention tips to better secure your home and belongings:

- Lock all windows and doors.
- Install hard wired alarm systems.
- Install outdoor lighting throughout the exterior.
- Install security cameras.
- Place valuables (jewelry, important papers) in a safe.
- Lock side gates and rear doors.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house.
- If out of town ask a neighbor to pick up your, mail, packages and newspaper.

Van Nuys Blvd. Simi-Closure. If you have not already heard Metro is installing a light rail system on Van Nuys Blvd. that will greatly impact the traffic and quality of life during the construction process. Beginning in April 2025 Van Nuys Blvd. will only have one lane of traffic for north bound traffic and one lane for south bound traffic from Gault Street to Raymer Street.

Community Clean-ups: Our next community clean up is scheduled for Saturday March 8, 2025. Time and location TBD. If you are interested in participating, please email me at 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

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Hello everyone! 2025 has already been quite the journey and it feels like I am still catching up with all my follow ups, phone calls and emails. If you emailed or left me a message in the last several weeks and have still not received a response, please do not hesitate to send me a reminder, I will get back to you right away.

As most of you have seen and already know, between the Palisades Fires and the recent protests, my assignment and duties have been diverted to address all major incidents throughout the city.

So, in case I am away addressing any of the above, I wanted to do a quick reminder of some resources at your disposal that can assist you with filing a report online or solving practically any other quality of life issue you may have in the area.

Community Online Reporting System (CORS):

- Identity Theft
- Lost Property

- Harassing/Annoying Phone Calls/Electronic Mail
- Hit and Run Collisions:
- Traffic Collisions that involve:
 - Complained of pain and/or other visible injuries; and,
 - Minor damage.
- Burglary/Theft from Vehicle, Plain Theft, or Petty Theft, when:
 - The property taken is valued at less than, \$5000;
 - Theft was not a result of a forged or counterfeit check, credit card fraud, a financial scam, or extortion;
 - The property taken was not a gun; and,
- The person reporting is the owner of the property taken (e.g., individual, or employee of a business).
- Grand Theft-Pickpocket when:
 - The suspect is not at the scene;
- There is no possibility of locating the suspect through a limited follow up investigation by field personnel; and,
 - The property taken is valued at less than \$5, 000.
- Vandalism

My LA 311:

- The 311 Call Center provides various options to connect to a wide variety of non-emergency City services and general City information. Some of the most popular City Services can be requested by calling 311 or (213) 473-3231, visiting <https://myla311.lacity.org> or using the MyLA311 Mobile App.
- About the app, the MyLA311 app, City information and services are just a few taps away. Use the app to quickly and easily request the City's most popular services, including graffiti removal, pothole repair, and bulky-item pickup. Other features include access to the City Services knowledge base, map of nearby City facilities, City Social Media feeds. The app is available in English, Spanish, Korean, Armenian and Chinese.

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. Everyone else, please continue to e-mail, text and call me with questions, comments, concerns or anything that you think needs to be brought up to my attention or if there is anything I can do for you. However, please consider that I am not always on duty and that if you need police assistance please call 911 or the LAPD Non-emergency number at (877) 275-5273.

Basic Car 9A37

Senior Lead Officer Kristan Delatori

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Hello Los Angeles residents! If you find yourself involved in a traffic collision, please remember these important guidelines regarding vehicle towing:

DO NOT allow anyone to tow your vehicle unless the following applies to your situation

1. An Officer requests a tow.
2. You contact your own towing company directly by phone.

We have noticed an increase in tow companies approaching collision sites and “offering” their services. Please be aware that they are NOT authorized to do so. Protect yourself and your vehicle by following these steps. Always prioritize your safety and the safety of others at the scene of an accident. If you have any questions or need assistance, don’t hesitate to reach out to your local LAPD station.

When You Can Complete an On-line Police Report:

- **Minor Traffic Collisions:** Minor injuries and you have exchanged information
- **Hit and Run:** Damage caused by another vehicle in which the driver should have left information or fled the scene without stopping to provide information.

NOTE:

- *Traffic Collision Reports that involve an arrest, fatality, or juvenile cannot be released online and must be requested through United States Mail.*
- *Traffic Collision Reports issued prior to February 1, 2016, must be requested through United States Mail.*

IMPORTANT:

- Before attempting to obtain a copy of a Traffic Collision Report online, please allow a minimum of 45 days from the date of the collision to allow the report to be reviewed and approved for release.

Thank you for helping us keep our roads safe! 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

Basic Car 9A41

Senior Lead Officer Joel Gutierrez

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Hello basic car 9A41, we continue to see stolen bicycles in our division. It is very important that you take several precautions to help reduce this crime trend. First, make sure you're locking your bike up with a quality lock that can't be easily cut. Also, when storing your bike, try to keep it inside your residence, in a closed storage area, or garage out of sight.

Many of the stolen bicycles are being taken from underground parking garages and storage areas. Lastly, please make a note of the bicycles' serial number, usually located under the frame below the pedals. This is very important if the bicycle should be stolen so that the police can positively identify it as stolen property. Many of the stolen bicycles are quickly painted and made to look different and without a serial number it can be very difficult for us to identify.

Also, both residential and commercial burglaries continue to be a concern, so safeguard your home by making sure your residential doors and windows are securely locked when you're not home. Use an alarm and video surveillance cameras. Also, place signs around your home warning of alarm system and cameras to deter would be thieves. Utilize Nextdoor.com to share information and maintain awareness about what's going on in your neighborhood.

Lastly, please continue to be vigilant about not leaving items in your vehicle so that we can try to keep the property crime numbers down. Remember, "Lock it, hide it, Keep it." This works, so please share this with your friends and family!

Basic Car 9A63

Senior Lead Officer Mariana Romo

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Greetings Sherman Oaks! I have seen an increase in residential burglaries. Please note that it takes all of us to keep our communities safe. Let's utilize these prevention tips to help secure our homes.

- **Secure doors and windows:** Lock all doors and windows, including rear sliding doors, side gates, and garage doors
- **Install security devices:** Install an alarm system, security cameras, and motion-activated lights
- **Secure valuables:** Keep valuables in a safe or bank safe deposit box
- **Improve lighting:** Install outdoor lights and trim bushes to remove hiding places
- **Be aware of suspicious activity:** Report suspicious activity to the police
- **Join a Neighborhood Watch:** Learn how to recognize signs of an impending burglary

Additional burglary prevention tips:

- Keep your home and property in good condition
- Consider attaching a GPS tracking device to valuables
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home when you're away

What to do if your home is broken into:

1. Go to a safe place
2. Call the police
3. File a report
4. Take inventory of stolen and damaged items

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.

Burglary of a motor vehicle is a property crime that involves unlawfully entering a vehicle with the intent to steal or commit a felony. To prevent burglary from a motor vehicle, you can:

- **Lock your vehicle:** Always lock your vehicle's doors and roll up the windows.
- **Use anti-theft devices:** Install a steering wheel lock, alarm, or other anti-theft device.
- **Remove valuables:** Take any valuables out of your car or put them in the trunk out of sight.
- **Park in a safe place:** Park in a well-lit area at night, or in a locked garage if possible.
- **Don't leave your car unattended:** Never leave your vehicle unattended with the engine running.
- **Get an ownership certificate:** When buying a used car, make sure you receive an ownership certificate.

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.