



Public Safety Newsletter

April 14, 2010

Dear Community Friends:

Street Robberies

There have been an increasing number of street robberies in the last month. Even though there may not be a threat in your neighborhood, this is still a good topic to discuss. If you practice the following Crime Prevention and Personal Safety tips as a part of your life style, then you can reduce and prevent this kind of crime from happening to you.

These crimes can occur anytime or anywhere. The suspects in robberies are usually males, but are sometimes females. The race descriptions vary from white, black, Hispanic or unknown. Robbery victims are male, female, young and old. The perpetrators either displayed weapons or implied they are armed.

How are the criminals approaching their targets? The victims are approached by the suspect(s) who ask for the time, ask for money, ask directions, etc. and then grab the victim's property such as purses, cash, keys, wallets, cell phones and then run away. Sometimes the suspects attack as they pass by the victims. Several victims have been knocked to the ground or struck during the commission of the crime.

What can you do to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim? Strong-arm robberies or muggings are usually crimes of opportunity. Criminals scout for people who show signs of vulnerability.

- ❑ Before leaving home, decide what you actually need to take with you rather than taking your entire handbag or wallet.
- ❑ Minimize the possessions you carry. Carry valuables in an inside pocket or small bag worn under your coat or clothes.
- ❑ Wear clothing and shoes that are comfortable, low profile and appropriate for the weather. The most fashionable choice may not be the safest choice.
- ❑ Plan to travel on main streets that are well-lit with lots of traffic and people around. There really is safety in numbers so travel with others.

- ❑ Learn to be aware of your surroundings and know who is around you. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable ask yourself, why? Are they too close? Are they watching you? Are they trying to engage you in conversation?
- ❑ **LISTEN TO YOUR INNER FEELINGS AND ACT ON THEM.** You may decide to cross the street, move to another location or go into a store and ask for help.

To minimize potential injury, tell yourself you will not risk your safety over money or other possessions. Shock and fear often cause us to react or resist when confronted. Robbers often then increase their aggression to get what they want. Most victims who are hurt in strong arm robbery incidents are hit or thrown down on the ground while playing "tug-of-war" in refusing to give up their purse or wallet.

- ❑ Practice getting good descriptions of people, so that you will be able to provide details to 9-1-1. Pay attention to where you are, such as street names, geographic locations, etc.
- ❑ Have your cell phone available to call 9-1-1 if necessary.
- ❑ If a stranger asks you a question, step back and give yourself room to move away quickly if necessary.
- ❑ Maintain confident body language on the street, with head up and neutral face. Look at passersby. Avoid being on auto-pilot on the streets.

Resources To Keep You Informed

Police Blotter, <http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/>

Subscribe to SPD: Crime Blotter

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/SeattlePoliceSouthwestPrecinct>

Police Blotter, Megan Sheppard, West Seattle Herald

<http://www.westseattleherald.com/news/police%20blotter/>

West Seattle Blog, Tracy Record, Editor

http://westseattleblog.com/blog/?page_id=4988

Seattle Police Department main web page

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/>

Southwest Precinct Web-page

<http://www.seattle.gov/police/Precincts/Southwest/default.htm>

Seattle Police Crime Statistics

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/crime/stats.htm>

For more information or questions call:

Benjamin Kinlow, (206) 684-7724

Crime Prevention Coordinator,

Email benjamin.kinlow@seattle.gov. Check out

www.seattle.gov/police/precincts/southwest/prevention.htm