Seattle Police Email Community Newsletter
August 23, 2012

Dear Community Friends,

Increase in Street Robberies

We have noted an increase in strong armed robberies in the South Precinct area in the past several weeks. These robberies have been in the form of necklaces being grabbed from around the victims' neck, purse snatches, and cell phones being snatched out of victims' hands.

In most incidents, the crime victims describe a lone male suspect, however we have incidents involving two or more male suspects and another involving one male and one female as the robbers. Based on the witness and victim descriptions, there may be several different suspects committing these robberies. The robberies have occurred most often in the afternoon-evening hours. In most cases, the robbery victim was alone or had appeared to be alone.

The victims of these crimes have noted that the suspects had either been following them or had been observing them for a short time before committing the robbery. One victim noted a suspect following her in and out of several stores. She got nervous and left one store, which is when the robber struck. Other witnesses have noted that the suspects appeared to be waiting and watching for potential victims.

In resisting the robbers, several of the victims suffered injuries, soreness and bruising.

Seattle Police Detectives are investigating all of these robberies. If you have any information which you feel may be of use, please call Seattle Police Department South Precinct Detectives at 206-386-1855

What You Can Do: Personal Safety/Robbery Prevention & Response

We offer the following prevention and response to increase your personal safety awareness and reduce your chances of being a robbery victim, regardless of the neighborhood in which you live.

- Follow your intuition. Pay close attention to the uncomfortable feelings that often warn us of potential danger. "Trust Your Gut." If you feel that a situation is not right, move out of the situation. Trusting your own instincts that a situation feels "wrong" can be the best personal safety tool you have. Don't be afraid to cross the street, change directions, return to a business, or ask for help based on that "funny feeling;" you may be right.
- Scan your surroundings and make eye contact with people, not to stare them down, but to let them know that you are aware of them and acknowledge their presence. This sends the message that you not only know they are there, but you can also identify them if necessary.
- Avoid walking or jogging alone at night. As much as possible, walk or travel with a friend, even during the daytime. Stay on paths that are well lit where you can easily see and be seen.
- Maintain positive control over your items. It is best to carry a purse across the body, not just over the shoulder. It's even better to carry the purse across the body and under your coat so the purse is not exposed.
- If you are going to wear necklaces, wear them under clothing rather than have them in full display. You may also want to consider not wearing the necklace for your normal day-to-day routine; leave them safely at home.
- Carry your valuables safely. Don't display items (e.g., iPods, iPhones, cash, jewelry), when walking to and from your destination or while on a bus or train
- If you are being followed, or you see a person or group that makes you feel uncomfortable, give yourself permission to act; cross the street, walk in another direction, go in to a business, or ask other people walking if you may walk a short distance with them.

If You Are Confronted

- If someone demands your property and displays or implies in any way that they have a weapon, don't resist. Physical property isn't worth getting injured or killed over. Always remember that you are more important than your stuff.
- Do not pursue your attacker. *Call 911 and report the crime as soon as possible.*

Thank you for all you do for your neighborhoods. Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, Crime Prevention Coordinator, mark.solomon@seattle.gov, 206.386.9766