

SAFETY TIPS TO HELP PREVENT RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

The City of Hercules has experienced a marked increase in residential burglaries during the first five months 2013, over the same time period for 2012. In 2012 there were 31 residential burglaries. In 2013 (as of May 22nd) there have been 43 residential burglaries. The big spike was the sixteen burglaries in April, including five in one day.

Most of the burglaries have been during the daylight hours, between 6:00am and 6:00pm. The locations have been all over the city. However, sometimes more than one home is targeted in a particular neighborhood.

Most residential burglaries are a “crime of opportunity”. Suspects look for an unoccupied home(s), with easy access. Twelve of the 43 burglaries, in 2013, have listed unlocked windows, or doors, as the point of entry. Four entries were through open windows on the second story. Forced side or back doors (out of sight) accounted for many of the entries.

The most common “method of operation”, for a residential burglar, is for the suspect(s) to wander around a neighborhood and look for unoccupied homes (away at work or on vacation). The suspect knocks on the door, or rings the door bell, and if someone answers they says they are looking for someone (Is Joe Smith here). The resident says “No one by that name lives here”, and the suspect moves on. If no one answers the door the suspect looks for an “easy” entry. If there is an unlocked door, or open window, they go inside. Most of the recent losses have been small electronic, jewelry, and cash (easily hidden and transported items).

If the suspect does not find an open door, or window, they may move on. The suspect may also go to the side of the house, or backyard, and find a garage door they can force; or a patio door that can be broken, without them being noticed (again out of sight).

HERE ARE SOME BASIC THINGS YOU CAN DO TO “HARDEN YOUR TARGET:

1) **WHEN YOU ARE NOT AT HOME LOCK ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS**

When the weather is nice it is tempting to leave a window open. However, even second story, or small bathroom, windows are vulnerable

2) If someone comes to your door, and you do not know them, do not answer the door. However, try to let the person know there is someone inside (Who is it? or maybe George can you get the door?) **CALL THE POLICE.** If you are using a home phone you can call **911, or 510-724-1111.** If you are using a Cell phone call **510-724-1111.**

3) Try to make your residence look occupied. Think about leaving a car in the drive way. Try not to leave your trash cans out all day. Maybe you have a neighbor who will put you trash cans on the side of the house.

4) If you are going to be gone for a few days have someone collect your mail, and or paper. If you are expecting a package try to have someone pick it up for you.

5) If you are going to be gone for any length of time make sure someone is taking care of your yard, so the house looks lived in. Leave lights on timers. Place the lights in several locations and vary the times they go on and off.

6) **WATCH OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOR AND ASK THEM TO WATCH OUT FOR YOU.**

You and your neighbors are the eyes and ears for the Police Department. If you see, or hear, something suspicious, call the police **IMMEDIATELY.**