



## WRCA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

June 2014

### June: National Safety Month

Since June is National Safety Month, this newsletter will review many aspects of safety. A refresher is always helpful because in our everyday busy lives we can forget some of these tips that should be developed into habits and shared with our children and neighbors.

First, a bit about reporting details when calling dispatch.

#### Non-Emergency: 264-5471

Call when:

- you are observing suspicious activity,
- if you have been robbed or burgled,
- crimes already happened without injuries, or
- if you suspect a stolen car has been dumped.

Dispatchers are expert interrogators - they will ask for the same things the same ways every time you call.

- Suspect description: heat to foot, outside clothes to inside
- Gender/Race/Height/Body Frame/Hair Color/Clothing
- Any good identifier (red shoes, tattoo, scar, piercings)
- Auto description—CYMBOL (color, year, make, body style, other, license)

Be mindful of the 5 W's:

Where: location, location, location

What: nature of the incident

Who: the parties involved and descriptions

When: is this in progress or already occurred

Weapons involved?

Remember to ask for a case number - you may need to call and follow up with more information at a later time.



#### Emergency: 732-0100

For crimes in progress, and 911 for life and death emergencies, weapons being used, someone being hurt, escalating suspicious behavior already reported

### Be a Part of Witter Ranch Community Alliance

There is something for everyone: Board positions; Event, Crime & Safety, Traffic, Parks, and Outreach Committees; as well as attending quarterly or Neighborhood Watch meetings.

Browse through the opportunities to participate by going online to [witerranchcommunity.org/projects-teams/](http://witerranchcommunity.org/projects-teams/)

Witter Ranch Community Alliance (WRCA) is the all volunteer neighborhood association of the Gateway West and Park View neighborhoods of Natomas.

WRCA's purpose is to promote a sense of community

among the two neighborhood residents. The group is committed to keeping the neighbors informed of important developments that affect our safety, security, and quality of life. The group represents the best interests of the community.

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# WRCA Neighborhood Watch

## Are You Familiar with 311?



Download and use the 311 City of Sacramento app.

311 provides a single point of contact for City of Sacramento services. They handle requests for building permits, stray animals, utilities services, and much more. The 311 customer service agents undergo extensive training to ensure each caller gets a courteous, quick and accurate response - 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays.

Now you can submit most common issues to the City through the Online Service Request Portal, including missed garbage, recycle and yard waste service, code

violations, broken parking meters, or a host of other services.

**Call 311 or (916) 264-5011 - Toll free** within Sacramento  
**\*Cellular service providers may charge for air time\***

Note – If your call is routed to the County when dialing 311 within City Limits, please inform the 311 Agent, and they can forward your problem to your telephone service provider. Alternatively, you can report the issue directly to your telephone service provider's customer service department.

Different ways to use 311:

**Download** the Android App or iPhone App

Submit an **Online Service Request**

(<https://apps.cityofsacramento.org/311/asp/home.aspx>)

**TTY** (916) 808-8563

**Email** :  
311@cityofsacramento.org

**\*Non time-sensitive issues only\*** - Typical email response time is within 72 business hours. If you need service sooner, please call us.

## Neighborhood Crime and Safety Tips

In this edition we are going to cover security tips. The topics discussed will include: Neighborhood Crime; Home Security; Garage, Driveway, Yard, and Car security; and Personal safety.

Starting with Neighborhood Crime tips, consider the following:

- Always be aware of your surroundings. This goes for men as well as women. Victims are often distracted or may walk with their heads down. Non-victims walk with their keys out, paying attention to their surroundings.
- Pay attention to vehicles that appear to be tailing or following you as you approach your home. **DO NOT DRIVE TO YOUR HOME.** Drive to a

well lit and populated area and call the police if necessary from your cell (732-0100).

- As you pull into your garage/driveway, be aware of individuals on foot in the area. Check the mirrors on your car to make sure that no one has managed to slip into the garage and hide around your vehicle.
- Keep your garage door closed and the interior door locked.
- If you park in the driveway, have your house key ready before exiting the car and be ready to lock the car as you exit.
- Most new cars have a panic button on the key fob, aftermarket panic

alarms are available if you don't already have one.

- If you park inside your garage, make sure the door closes completely before you close the interior door.
- Try not to unload items from the car until the garage door is safely closed.
- Do not open the door if you do not know the person outside.
- When suspicious people (even when not involved in an apparent criminal act) are seen in the neighborhood, take the time to write down a description or vehicle license plate number. Report suspicious activity and crime to the police.



## Security Around the Home

Some Home Security tips for thought:

### 1. Safely answering the door:

- If someone knocks at your door, let them know someone is there. Without opening the door, let them know that someone is home and that you are not alone by yelling, “John, there is someone at the door.”, followed by, “Who is it?”.
- Use your door viewer/peep hole before opening your door.
- If you decide to invite someone in, always ask for identification before admitting.
- Teach the kids these tips!

### 2. Harden your house:

- Always lock your doors and windows (including bathroom windows) before leaving. It may sound obvious, but 50% of burglaries occur through an open or unlocked window or door.
- Use security or dead-bolt locks on your doors.
- Put a padlock on your utility box so the power cannot be shut off.
- Lock and pin your sliding glass doors and windows.
- Don't hide keys outside (under mats, over doors,

in flower pots).

- Trim shrubbery in the front yard to prevent places to hide.
- Put exterior lighting in front, particularly any doors into the house. Use motion sensor devices so lights will come on automatically.
- Leave your TV or talk radio on when you are gone.
- Vary your schedule and patterns of travel so that you are not so predictable.
- If you have a gate to the back yard, put a padlock on it.
- Get alarm and video systems installed in your home and vehicle.
- Put alarm signs in windows whether you have an alarm or not.
- Put “Beware of Dog” signs up whether you have a dog or not. Do not just get a dog for security reasons. You need to love it and care for it or otherwise it can become the neighborhood's problem.
- If you live in an apartment or other multi-unit dwelling, immediately notify management of any lighting or other security problems.
- Have lights and timers on in the house. It looks like someone is home and

you will not walk in to a dark house.

- Make sure you have your street address on your home that is visible to police and fire personnel.

### 3. Garage, Driveway, Yard, and Cars:

- Park your vehicle in the garage if you are able.
- If you park in the driveway, make sure it is well-lit.
- Always lock your car and do not leave valuables in it.
- In fact, DO NOT leave anything visible at all in your car.
- Don't leave your garage door open and unattended.
- Close and lock your garage door—no matter how short a time you may be “stepping away”.
- Disable remote opening of garage door when leaving town for more than 24 hours.
- Install a solid core or a security screen door at the pedestrian entryway going into the garage from the yard.
- Install strike plate that are strong enough to withstand excessive force.

HAVE LIGHTS AND TIMERS ON IN THE HOUSE. IT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE IS HOME AND YOU WILL NOT WALK IN TO A DARK HOUSE.



## District 1 Events and News

**Natomas at Nite:** Join Mayor Pro Tem Angelique Ashby and your neighbors for this year's summer movie nights! Free fun for the whole family including a bike valet and refreshments. All movies will be shown at 8pm at North Natomas Regional Park on Friday, June 27 (Monsters University), Friday, July 25 (Surf's Up) and Friday, August 29 (Frozen). All you have to do is show up with a blanket or lawn chairs. Dogs are welcome as long as they remain on a leash.

**WRRDA Signing:** Mayor Kevin Johnson and Mayor Pro Tem Angelique Ashby were in Washington, DC to witness the President signing the Water Resources Reform and Development Act. The \$12.3 billion measure sets policies, programs and projects for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and authorizes 34 projects related to waterways, harbor deepening, environmental restoration and flood control.

For Natomas, the bill author-

izes funding (approximately \$600 million) to finish the \$1 billion in improvements that are needed to make the levees safe. These improvements will help protect the lives of over 100,000 residents and \$7 billion in property. If work begins next year, it is expected to be completed in 2020.

"Today is a great day for Natomas, Sacramento and our entire region," said Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson.

## Personal Safety Thoughts

### Personal Safety:

- Keep your wallet in your front pocket and your money separate.
- If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out of the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you, but everyone else will. This has saved lives. There are also trunk release buttons and handles inside most trunks.
- Don't sit in your car and lose yourself in your activity. The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side.
- As soon as you get into your car lock the doors and leave.

- Be aware of your surroundings and cars parked next to your.
- If you are nervous about people or cars in the lot, ask a security guard or police officer to escort you to your car.
- You are allowed to possess 2.5 ounces of Pepper Spray. If you have some, be ready to use it when you walk to your car.

IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY, AND BETTER PARANOID THAN DEAD.

- Experts agree on one thing: you should always listen to your strongest instinct when making life and death decisions.
- Always take the elevator instead of the stairs. Stairwells are horrible

places to be alone and the perfect crime spot. This is especially true at night.

- If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, ALWAYS RUN, preferable in a zigzag pattern. The predator will only hit a running target 4 in 100 times; and even then, it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ.

*\*All safety information provided in this edition of the newsletter was extracted from the Neighborhood Watch training series, specifically the "Personal and Home Security" presentation of Barbara Falcon, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Sacramento Police Department.*



Movies in the Park at the North Natomas Regional Park.



Mayor Johnson and Mayor Pro Tem Ashby at the White House on June 10, 2014 for the historic WRRDA bill signing.

NORTH NATOMAS LIBRARY: JOB SEARCHING WITH LINKEDIN, WEDNESDAY JULY 9TH FROM 1-4 PM.



National Night Out: It's a wonderful opportunity for communities nationwide to promote police-community partnerships, crime prevention, and neighborhood camaraderie.

## Join in the upcoming National Night Out block party events!

This year the WRCA Gateway West and Parkview neighborhoods will enjoy National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5th. The Crime and Safety Committee working in conjunction with the Neighborhood Watch program, has created smaller neighborhood zones that will each have a block party. Efforts are in progress to work with Block Captains to coordinate the events.

Keeping the evening simple and bringing smaller groups of immediate neighbors out to meet each other is really the goal this year. The whole community will benefit from the festivities. As we get to know each other living around us, we become more personally invested in looking out for each other and our community.

Here are few benefits of knowing your neighbors and some good neighbor tips...

When you are going to be gone for a day or more, let one or more of your neighbors know. Ask them to pick up the paper, mail, or put your garbage cans away. If you are gone for an extended period of time, ask your neighbors to watch your house, cancel your paper, and have the Post Office hold the mail.

Be familiar with your neighbor's coming and goings, visitors, vehicles, etc. If they are gone and you observe any suspicious activity, call the police non-emergency number and report it. If it doesn't "feel right" to you, it is better to make the call. If it turns out that nothing was wrong, that is OK. Better to be safe than sorry.

## Remember to Take Action

Be an aware and active community member, remember to do a few of these things, if not all:

1. Become familiar with the Witter Ranch Community Alliance (WRCA) and the webpage: [witerranchcommunity.org/](http://witerranchcommunity.org/)

2. Join one of the several WRCA committees or attend quarterly meetings.

3. Download the 311 City of Sacramento mobile app.

4. Be an observer in your neighborhood and practice some of the security tips.

5. Make at least one change to better secure your home, garage, or yard.

6. Consider the personal safety tips and create a new safe habit.

7. Make an effort to meet your neighbors when the opportunity presents itself and share this information!

And do not forget:

Don't hesitate to call and make a report when you see suspicious behavior, criminal activity, or code violations. The police need our help as much as we need theirs.

Stay tuned for next month's meeting information and newsletter issue.

**Save the date, Tuesday, August 5th for National Night Out!**

