

LAPD Reports Increase in Burglaries

While crime statistics are showing an overall decrease, recent reports from the Los Angeles Police Department and other local law enforcement agencies show a marked increase in certain "hot spot" areas. These areas include Encino, Toluca Lake, Sherman Oaks, Van Nuys, Reseda, Tarzana, and parts of West Los Angeles. Some of the burglars are possibly part of a sophisticated crime ring that tends to concentrate on more affluent residential areas.

In many of these break-ins, the intruders were specifically targeting gold jewelry, usually shunning any items with serial numbers or other identifying information. Common means of entry have been through open doggie doors, unlocked windows, and through second story windows using the homeowners unsecured ladders that were left outside and accessible.

Some in the LAPD are blaming this uptick on a controversial early-release program for prison inmates. While there is no statistical evidence linking the increased number of parolees to the recent rise in crime, they are noticing that many of those arrested are repeat offenders.

The LAPD and other crime prevention bureaus are issuing reminders to the public as to ways to help protect yourselves and your property:

- Always securely close and lock all accessible doors and windows when you leave home.
- If you have an alarm system, use it, even if you are only going out for a short time.
- If you have ladders stored outside, lock them up with a chain and padlock.
- Be wary of anyone that you don't know that knocks on your door; there have even been several incidents where a well-dressed man has come to some doors claiming to be a representative from an "alarm company", but with no identifying documents to back it up. Don't open your door or offer any information if you don't know who it is. If they do not leave or become belligerent, call the police immediately.
- If you have a doggie door, try not to leave it open all the time, and see about adding a reinforced locking cover when it's not in use.

Notes From Jane & Lloyd

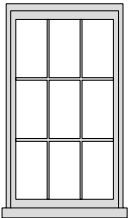
Ok, here's a bit of ancient history. Back in high school I had a summer job as a door-to-door salesman for a well-known brush company. This was in a time when most sales were transacted face-to-face in a retail setting, or on a doorstep. Mail-order was more of a novelty and on-line internet sales was a futuristic vision. While I enjoyed meeting many of my neighbors, it was definitely not a career path I wanted to pursue.

Fast forward to 2012— the door-to-door sales man is now a relic of the past. On-line ordering aside, most of us do not feel safe opening our doors to a total stranger and giving them money or personal information. Yet this is almost a standard procedure among criminals. Ring the doorbell to see if anyone is home, and have a lame excuse ready if someone answers.

We want our friends and customers to play it safe— unless it's a little girl in a uniform with cookies, be careful about opening your door!

*Best regards,
Jane & Lloyd Silverstein
Metrowest Security Systems*

Replacing Doors & Windows



As we transition from winter into spring, you may be considering replacing your old and drafty doors and windows. The advantages of replacement are obvious; energy savings, more comfortable environment, and better security. In most cases, it is a simple matter of installing new contacts on the new windows during a service visit, but there are some things that can be planned in advance that will minimize the time and expense of re-connecting:

Plan ahead: Notify us as soon as possible when you have a confirmed date for installation of your new doors or windows. Let us know how many openings will be changed, and what type they will be. If there are any delays, let us know as soon as possible.

Talk to your contractor: Let them know that you have an alarm system, and that the new windows and doors will need to be re-connected to the alarm. Have them call us if they have any concerns or questions.

Leave the wires: Make sure that the contractor leaves the existing wiring accessible in or around the new frame. If the wires become buried or damaged, it may cost more to re-wire.

Save the transmitters: If your old doors or windows were alarmed with wireless transmitters, be sure to remove them before they get lost or damaged. If you also remove the corresponding magnet and temporarily attach it to the transmitter with some tape, your system should still function normally until they can be re-installed.

Check your warranty: Some window and door manufacturers might void your warranty if any holes are drilled through the new frames. If this is the case, let us know so that we can install surface mounted contacts instead of concealed ones.

Alarm screens: If you previously had alarm screens on your windows, they most likely will not fit the new windows and will need to be remade. Be aware that these will need to be measured and ordered in advance, after the windows are installed.