

AUGUST 2012

Quarterly Community Newsletter

ABOUT THE "RISE IN CRIME"

Everyone knows since the stock market fell in 2008, the economy has sunk to depths we have not seen in decades. Federal, state and county budgets all over the country are struggling and have been cut. Services have been reduced or eliminated. Taxes, fees and prices on merchandise are raising. Even in Hemet, we now have fewer city employees, fewer firefighters, fewer police officers. For surviving employees, wages have been cut. Our trash department has been leased out for 20 years to a private company. All to save money and earn some. We have many, many vacant homes that were lost to foreclosure and many, many new people who live here with reduced or no earned income. In view of all of this, one question is on everyone's mind – here in the Valley – has crime increased? In some areas, yes. In others, no. Is this unique? No, according to experts. In every recession since the late 50's – crime has exploded to historic highs in the years that followed, in particular, property crimes and robberies.

WHY?

Then the question is – why have some property crime rates gone up here? The most logical answer may be because we have so many more people living here than ever before. In 2007, the population was about 71,705. In 2011, it had risen to about 79,309. That's an increase of almost 8000 people while "boots on the street" (patrol officers) in Hemet was decreased by 13 in that same time frame.

Also, another thing we have to remember is the unemployment rate in the U.S. is now 8.2% - what the government calls a recession-level figure, even though the Great Recession has technically been over for three years. Here, in Riverside County, the jobless rate records in July was 13.4%. Plus, we should remember, a few months ago about 80,000 California residents lost their unemployment benefits. Jobs are not easy to find here. And, if a family has no income and the kids are hungry – people might do things they ordinarily would never think of doing.

Also, we need to remember that we still have the reputation of being a senior community. Why is that important? Think about it for a minute. What is in a senior's home? Gold,

silver, diamonds in the jewelry box, sterling silver flatware and tea sets in the dining room, prescription medication in the bathroom, and all kinds of good tools and/or sports equipment in the garage. Would you find all these treasures in the homes of newly-weds?

Now, with property crime rates in the Valley up, no one knows if they will be the next victim. Please understand, we have folks who come here, or live here, who will take advantage of opportunities – opportunities we create when we become careless with our own safety and the safety of our possessions.

Following are three lists of very basic reminders of how to keep ourselves, our family, and our community safer from harm.

WEAPONS FOR PROTECTION

In the last few months at our Neighborhood Watch meetings we've heard more and more questions about guns. Following is a sample of the most recent questions asked:

- **"Should I show off my guns and tell all my neighbors about them?"**

Our recommendation: If you know your neighbors and you trust them – you can tell them anything you want to. However, displaying weapons to the world is like creating an invitation to the bad guys. Bad guys love to have weapons. Chances are, if they know you have guns, they will wait until one day you leave your home, break in and take your guns plus whatever else they may want. A weapon on display is an open invitation.

- **"Should I keep a toy gun on my night stand?"**

Our recommendation: Think about it for a minute. When a burglar breaks into your home they are already at a high level of emotional energy. When they see a gun pointed at them – they are going to act to defend themselves and probably attack you. Firing a toy gun will offer you no protection. You could die.

- **"My hand gun trigger is so stiff it requires a finger from both hands to get it to fire. Is that o.k.?"**

Our recommendation: No, it would be a better idea to go to a gun store and trade your gun for one that is easier to handle and use.

- We've been asked by several citizens – **"Should we buy a gun for protection?"**

We cannot answer that question for you. We can tell you that we take burglary reports quite often wherein guns (that were purchased for "protection") were stolen while the owner was, **"At the store...I was only gone for a few minutes."** The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees your right to own arms. BUT IT HAS TO BE YOUR DECISION.

To help you consider what to do, we went to one of our in-house experts on guns and their use. We asked Sgt. Jim Anderson of the Hemet Police Department, his opinion and for information. Following is what we were told:

GUNS IN HOMES

I've been an officer for over twenty years, including Department Range Master. Following is my opinion and recommendations.

If you are going to have a firearm in the home for protection, you must be proficient with it. That means get to a range and practice shooting, loading, reloading and unloading. You should practice in different conditions such as full light and low light. Shooting is a perishable skill and you have to practice. Check with the NRA for instructors in your area.

Revolvers require less maintenance than a semi-automatic pistol. This is a personal choice. You may prefer a rifle or shotgun for personal protection. Use a caliber you are comfortable shooting. A heavy recoiling firearm is not comfortable to shoot and therefore may not get to the range frequently. Likewise, a very small caliber gun may not be very effective in immediately stopping a threat. Some ranges will let you rent guns to shoot. This may aid in helping select the right gun for you.

Keep in mind, some bullets penetrate more than others. If you live in a mobile home park, this could be an issue if a bullet misses its intended target. It can easily go through and into another residence.

If you choose to use a firearm to protect you and your family, you must be mentally prepared to take a life if need be. It is a personal choice and not for everyone. A big mistake is getting a firearm with no intention of using it – and brandish it in hopes of scaring an intruder away.

You should check the laws of your state regarding self-defense. They do vary. For example, once an intruder is no longer a threat, you can't just shoot him as he is running away. Remember, you are PROTECTING yourself and your loved ones. If the intruder flees after being confronted, you have accomplished your goal.

Also, check laws in regards to storing firearms. They cannot be accessible to children. You are liable for any accidents that occur with an improperly stored firearm. My opinion is to teach children gun safety and introduce them to shooting if they desire, when they are mature enough to handle it. This takes the mystery and curiosity factor out of it.

For more information on guns:

1. Go to the yellow pages of your telephone book and look under GUNS/GUNSMITHS.
2. For information or assistance in locating an NRA Certified Instructor who is in our area contact:
The NRA Training Department
11250 Waples Mill Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

And, you can ask them about a book titled "The Basics of Personal Protection", a Publication of the National Rifle Assn. of America. For membership information call:
1-800-NRA-3888

3. For California state information call:

1-916-227-7527 - California Department of Justice, Bureau of Fire Arms
Also, ask about the Hand Gun Safety Certificate Program.

4. Cameron Book Store at 2920 E. Florida Ave., in Hemet, has some books regarding the subject, to buy at a reasonable price, if you are interested.
5. Consider investigating the purchase of Pepper Spray or a citizen TASER if guns do not interest you.

OUT AND ABOUT

1. Each day as you dress yourself for the events of the day, dress your wallet accordingly. Carry only what you will need. If you do not plan to write a check, do not carry the book. You do not need to carry \$500 if all you are doing is getting a haircut. Carry only the debit/credit cards you plan to use that day. Leave everything else you don't need at home, in a safe place. Also, consider carrying your cash in a place separate from your I.D., credit/debit cards and other required documents. If you lose one – you may not lose the other.
2. Carry your wallet in an inside jacket pocket or in a front pant's pocket. If you must use your back pocket, place a large wide rubber band around the wallet.
3. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Also, carry the purse on the side away from traffic. If vehicles or pedestrians are on your left side, carry your purse on your right side.
4. Have your vehicle/house keys in your hand before you leave the protection of a building or your vehicle.
5. Drive with your vehicle's doors locked and the windows up. Keep your vehicle as empty as possible. See the Local Alerts section of this newsletter.
6. If visiting an ATM – carefully verify there are no strange or unusual cameras or devices mounted in the transaction area. Place your other hand slightly over the key pad as you enter your information. Be mindful of people behind you with cell phones.
7. When purchasing gasoline for your vehicle, use a credit card.
8. When in a parking lot be alert and aware of what is going on around you. Also, remember to manually lock your vehicle when you are in a public parking lot. There are electronic devices out there that can read the Radio Frequency Code your vehicle key sends when used to lock your vehicle.
9. Do not give cash to Panhandlers – no matter how sad the story they tell you. Suggest they visit the Salvation Army, the Community Pantry, Valley Restart and/or any other place you know that could help – if they really have a need. If you were in trouble – wouldn't your family, friends or church help you? Don't forget to donate to these worthy causes.

AT YOUR HOME

1. Verify that all the locks on your doors and windows are intact and working. Consider adding supplemental locks. Use all your locks when you are in your house or out of it.
2. If you have a burglar alarm system, even if you're just running out for 15 minutes, turn it on.
3. Posting a detailed burglar alarm sign at your home tells most burglars how to disable the system. Buy a generic sign from a home supply store that simply states "This House is Protected by an Alarm System."
4. Do not allow strangers you did not invite, into your home. A baby's diaper can be changed in a public restroom or the parents' vehicle – they do not need to come inside your house. Public and Professional employees have IDs. Ask to see the ID while they are outside, lock the door, then call the company or department they profess to work for to verify their story. People who need to use your bathroom can go to the nearest gas station, restaurant, mall or public facility. No one is going to give you something for nothing. Be very critical of all free offers you receive.
5. When you park your vehicle, take the keys out of the ignition, close the windows and lock all the doors.
6. Have all regularly incoming checks direct-deposited into your bank. Pick up your mail as soon as possible after it is delivered or consider using a locking mail box.
7. Make sure your home is well lighted. However, leaving the lights on 24/7 is no more a deterrent than a dark house. In fact, it helps burglars see better once they are inside. Use timers that turn lights on and off in different parts of the house at different intervals.
8. Make sure your shrubs and trees are carefully trimmed. Tall bushes and shrubs allow burglars to jimmy windows without being seen. Untrimmed trees allow burglars to enter a second floor of your home more easily.
9. How long has it been since you've attended a neighborhood watch meeting, or held a block party, or gotten together with your neighbors?
10. Have you met the new residents on your block? Would you recognize them if you saw them?
11. Consider working to improve our community's well being. Volunteer as a tutor, group leader or mentor for children in your local school, church or sports venues. Be a neighborhood watch organizer. Join a local social, service or church group to help better the life in our community.
12. Do not let anyone rush you into signing anything – a contract, sales agreement,

insurance policy, etc. until you read it carefully. Consider having someone you trust check it over. When ever possible, hire a licensed contractor – then verify the license.

LOCAL ALERTS

Following are reports of events that have recently occurred here. All names, and sometimes gender, used in this newsletter are fictitious and have been changed to protect the innocent.

VEHICLE THEFT A short time ago a couple was arrested while breaking into a vehicle. When the Police Officers went to their home to check for other possible violations they found: Identification cards, driver's licenses, bank account information, check books, checks, credit cards, debit cards, social security cards and a list of names (sometimes with birth dates and social security numbers) of up to 60 possible victims. Most of the victims appeared to be from the local area and most had had their vehicles either stolen, broken into or burglarized.

Just because this couple was arrested, it doesn't mean the crime has stopped. There are other people out there who are doing the same thing. They want our treasures. They know too many people consider their locked vehicle to be a safety deposit box. It's not! It's a venerable piece of equipment.

Following are a few suggestions that may keep your vehicle and your possessions in the vehicle a little safer:

- ◆ Before you leave home – check the inside of your vehicle. It should look as empty as it was the first day it was driven away from the seller's show room floor. Consider everything you put into your vehicle today as something you will carry with you and that you will use today. If it's something you will not use until later in the day, consider putting it out-of-sight, like the trunk or on the floor of the vehicle with a blanket covering it. When you come home tonight – take everything you put in this morning and still have – out of the vehicle and back to your home.
- ◆ Just because you lock your glove compartment it is not a safe place to put your credit/debit cards, checkbook and other personal/private possessions. It's one of the first places a burglar will look. Keep the inside of your glove compartment filled with things that are practical for you to have.
- ◆ California law requires us to have our vehicle registration slip available all times. If you are the only driver of that vehicle, consider keeping the slip in your wallet or purse. If others drive the vehicle – we recommend you make a copy of the slip, but before you copy it, put a small piece of paper over your home address on the slip and then make the copy. Put the copy in the glove compartment. Then hide the original slip some where else in the vehicle. Be sure all the other drivers know what you've done. This will keep the vehicle burglar from knowing where you live and they can not then burglarize your home.
- ◆ If you have a trunk, keep only the things you need to help keep you safe and secure. Your trunk should not be considered a storage compartment for things not related to your safety or things you need to operate or repair your vehicle. When packing the

trunk with things you will need or use today, or you are planning to take home, keep an eye on who is around you. And, if you are in a parking lot, we recommend when you are finished packing, immediately get into your vehicle and drive away, at least move the vehicle to another location. If someone is watching you load your trunk and you go back to the office or into the shopping center, they could steal from your trunk the minute you are out of sight. How? Remember, there is only a glass window between them and your trunk release button.

- ◆ One more thing. We like to remind you if you are parking in a public parking lot, even if it's your church parking lot, before you get out of your vehicle – make sure all your windows are closed and then manually lock your vehicle. If you get out of your vehicle, close the door and press the button on your key to lock it – the Radio Frequency Code (RFC) that your key sends to the locks, can be read by a device that someone has aimed at you. Using that device they can then unlock your vehicle and you can become a victim of theft.

LOTTERIES, SWEEPSTAKES, CASH PAYOUTS, GRANTS, ETC.

It's all about the money. Everyone in the whole world would love to have our money and many (from all over the world) are trying every trick they can think of to get at least some of our money from us. Scammers collect our contact information – such as – email addresses, phone numbers or mailing addresses. Then they contact us, claiming we are winners of prizes, grants, cash payouts or any other thing they can think of to excite us. They tell us we will eventually receive thousands if not millions of dollars, but first – we must pay for something. Following are some samples of what we have seen recently:

Mike was notified by the "World Wealth Distribution Office" that he was a "worthy recipient of a \$40,000,000.00 Cash Payout." All he had to do was fill in a survey, "and return it in an envelope provided with a \$10 processing fee and send it" to an address in Australia.

Jane received a letter saying her "name competed against other names to become a MILLION \$ CONTEST Number Allocation Winner". All she had to do was to verify her name and send a \$10 fee by cash, check, money order or credit card number to "Payment Services International." This envelope also had an Australian address on the envelope.

Hank received a letter from "Euro Millones" in Madrid, Spain. The letter was happy to inform him he was among 17 international winners that would share \$13,871,150.00. The letter went on to say, "Your fund is now deposited with a bank and insured in your name. Due to false practices, we ask that you keep your award information strictly from public notice until your claim has been processedall participants were selected through a computer ballot system..... We hope your lucky name will draw a bigger cash prize in the subsequent programs ahead... To begin your lottery claims, please contact your agent." They then gave a foreign name and a foreign telephone number. Also enclosed with the letter was a full page "Payment Processing Form." The form requested detailed information all about Hank and his bank account.

Mike, Jane or Hank would have loved to receive all the money they were promised. BUT, they had no idea who they would be dealing with, no way to even check if the offers were

legitimate and they certainly weren't ready to give money or private personal information to strangers. They just gave the printed material to us so we could share them with you.

Note: Spain does have a national lottery, but their national law says no lottery money may leave their country.

Larry and Amy had a different kind of experience. In April, they received a letter from "CITI FINANCIAL – Devonshire House" in Westminster London. It said, "we are pleased to advise you that you are one of the winners in the Consumer Promotion Sweepstakes, organized from all consumers of major stores in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and Britain... The selected stores include Wal-Mart, Sears, ASDA, Curry's, WH Smith, Sports Direct, Argos and Safeway." The letter went on to say they (Larry and Amy) were approved for a lump sum of \$250,000.00 at no extra cost to them. It further said Federal and International regulations governed the collection of the prizes. As soon as the clearance fee was paid, the winnings would be transferred into their bank account. To begin the process all they had to do was phone a number in Canada.

In May (on the 28th), Larry and Amy received another letter from CITI FINANCIAL – Devonshire House with a check for \$4,100. The check appeared to come from an insurance company in Texas and was written on a bank in San Antonio, Texas. They received instructions, telling them "You are required to pay a total sum of \$1,600 for government tax. This amount is to be paid directly to the tax agent... through Western Union money transfer... Do not attempt to cash this cheque until you have contacted us..."

Larry and Amy deposited the \$4,100 check in their bank account on June 1. On June 4, they received a letter and the check from their bank. The letter stated the Texas account the check was written on could not be found and the deposit would be removed from their account. Larry and Amy gave us copies of their letters and the check.

Remember:

- Federal laws state a U.S. citizen can not participate in a foreign lottery.
- Our Federal laws also state we do not have to buy anything, or give any money up front to enter into any lottery, sweepstakes or game with any other name.
- It's only after we win a cash prize that is legitimate, and the cash is in our possession that the IRS will approach us for the taxes owed. Only the IRS does the collecting – no one else.

HEMET POLICE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

YOU HAVE A QUESTION? WE HAVE ANSWERS

Send your comments, suggestions, question, or just interesting thoughts to the Hemet Police Department. We might even publish them in a future edition of the Quarterly Newsletter. Reach us at:

Hemet Police Department
Neighborhood Watch, R. Moyer
450 East Latham Avenue
Hemet, CA 92543

Phone
(951) 765-2415

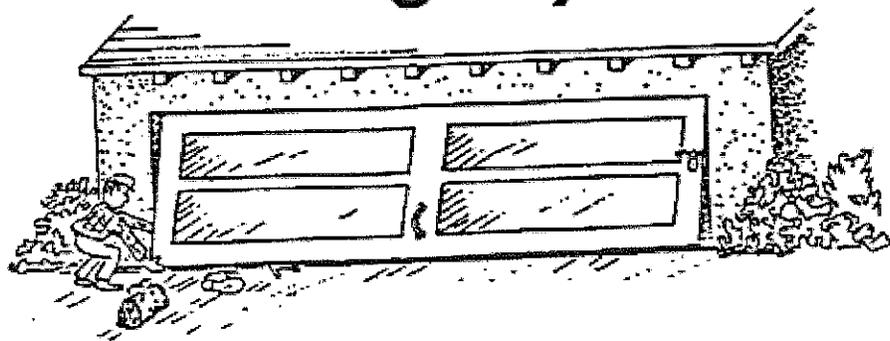
E-Mail
rmoyer@cityofhemet.org

Fax
(951) 765-2412

IS your garage secure from *Burglary?*



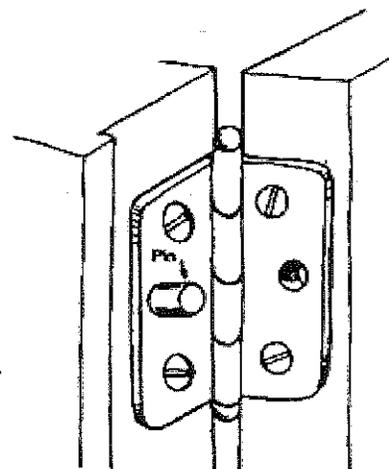
TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME



EXTERIOR DOOR HINGES

The door leading into the residence from an attached garage usually has hinge pins exposed to an attack from the garage side. To prevent removal of hinge pins follow these steps:

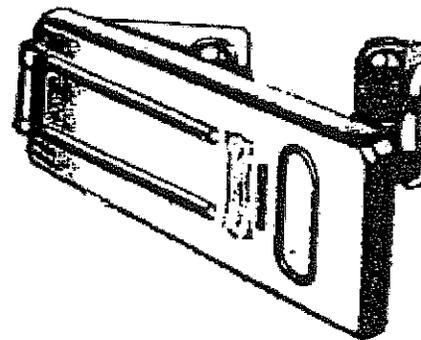
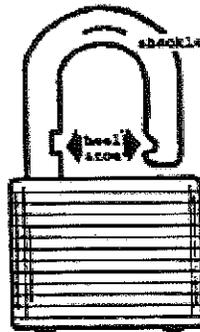
1. On the leaf that is attached to the door drill a small hole through the hinge plate into the door jamb and insert a solid metal pin, screw or nail. Cut the head off each screw or nail first.
2. After installation the pin should protrude from the hole about 1/2 inch. Close the door lightly, leaving a light impression of the protruding pin on the opposite hinge plate. Drill a small hole at the impression at least 1/2" deep. Do this for each hinge plate on the door. When the door is locked the hinge pins may still be removed but the door itself cannot be lifted out.



PADLOCKS AND HASPS

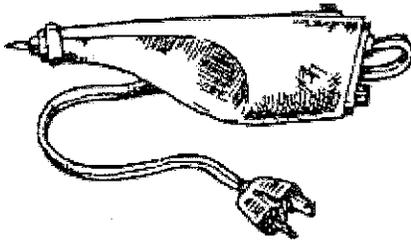
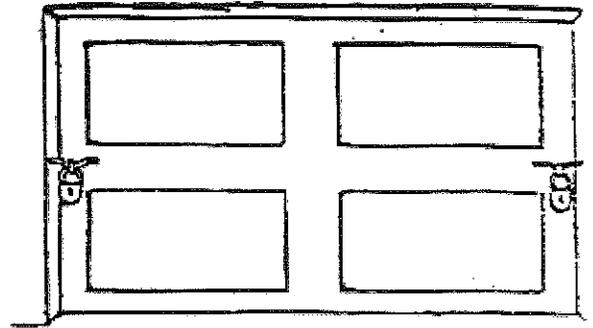
The most common assault on padlocks and hasps is with a large bolt cutter or pry bar. These are MINIMUM standards for padlocks and hasps.

- * Both should be made of hardened steel.
- * Padlocks should have a heel & toe locking mechanism and shackle not less than 9/32" thick.
- * Padlocks should have a 5 or 6 pin tumbler and a key retaining feature which prevents the removal of the key unless the padlock is properly locked.
- * Hasps must be installed with carriage bolts through the door. When installing hasps, insure that the mounting screws are covered when the hasp is locked.



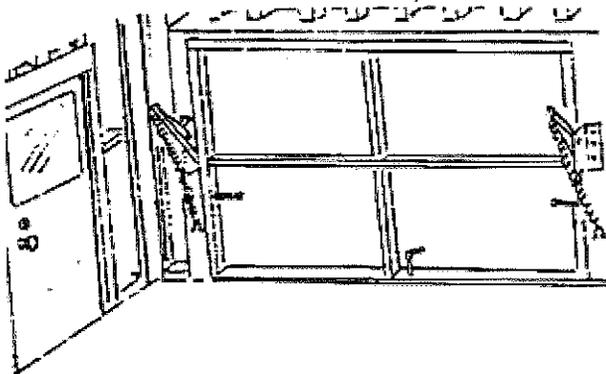
GARAGE DOOR SECURITY

- * Garage doors 16 or more feet in width need hasps & padlocks on **BOTH** sides. This is to prevent the lifting up of one side and crawling under the door.
- * **NEVER** leave your garage door open or unlocked. Even if you are home. It only takes a thief a moment to walk into your garage and steal your property.
- * **NOTE:** Make a record of all your property listing serial numbers. Engrave all your tools and other items with your **LICENSE NUMBER**.



CANE BOLTS

- * Cane bolts can be installed on the inside of the door. One bolt through the bottom frame of the door in the center will adequately secure the door from the inside. Sliding hasps can also be used on the inside of the door (See Diagram).



GARAGE WINDOWS

- * Windows that can be opened should be secured as all other windows in the home.
- * Exterior doors with windows require a deadbolt lock that is operated by a key on both sides.

ELECTRIC GARAGE DOOR OPENERS

- * Should be multi-frequency so that the door cannot be accidentally opened by other radio transmissions.
- * Exterior garage doors handles should be removed to prevent someone pulling up on the handle hard enough to break the garage door opener allowing access.
- * Periodically check the door to make sure it is properly adjusted to prevent the bottom from being lifted up.

GARAGE ACCESS DOORS

- * Should be of solid-core construction.
- * A deadbolt lock should be installed. The case or trim made of solid brass or steel and have a tapered rotating cylinder guard, 5 pin tumbler and a hardened steel bolt with at least a 1 inch throw.
- * All door jamb strike plates should be reinforced steel and installed with 3 inch screws.