



VAN NUYS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS

Senior Lead Officers Unit
6240 Sylmar Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91401

March 2021



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GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Please come out and help shape the future of your community.

NOTE: The below meetings are being held via Zoom due to Covid19 Mayor's Executive Order. Please reach out to them for the link to the meeting and additional information.

Van Nuys Neighborhood Council: General Board Meeting is the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., Location: Marvin Braude Constituents Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard., Van Nuys, CA.

Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council: General meeting is the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m., Location: Valley College, 5800 Fulton Avenue, Van Nuys, CA.

Valley Glen Neighborhood Association: General meeting is the 3rd Tuesday of every even numbered month at 7:00 p.m., Location: Valley College, 5800 Fulton Avenue, Van Nuys, CA.

Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council: General meeting is the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Location: Milikan Middle School, 5041 Sunnyslope Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA.

Sherman Oaks Homeowners' Association: General meeting is the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Location: Notre Dame High School located at 13645 Riverside Drive, Sherman Oaks, CA.

Van Nuys Clergy Council Meeting: General meeting is the last Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m., Location: Bernardi Senior Center, 6514 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA.

If you are interested in becoming a Block Captain and starting a Neighborhood Watch Program in your neighborhood, please call your Senior Lead Officer at the numbers listed below for further details.

Who to Contact

For crimes in progress and medical emergencies dial: 911.

To report any suspicious activity or person(s) call the Los Angeles Police Department Non-Emergency phone number at: **877-ASK-LAPD (877-275-5273)**.

Please let your friends and family that live in the City know about the Department's Community Online Reporting Service (CORS). LAPD offers online reporting service at www.lapdonline.org. We highly encourage using this fast and easy service to avoid coming to the station. The following crimes are eligible for online reporting: **Theft, Lost Property, Theft/Burglary from a motor vehicle, Identity theft, Minor-injury Traffic Collisions, hit and run traffic collisions, Annoying or Harassing phone calls/texts/emails, and Vandalism**. Upon completion of your online reporting, you will immediately receive a temporary report number and be able to print a copy of the report. The following requirements must be met to complete online reporting services:

- The incident is not an emergency.
- The incident occurred within the City of Los Angeles.
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- No one was injured as a result of the incident.
- There are no known suspect(s).
- The incident did not occur on the state highway.
- No firearms were involved in the incident.
- You must have an email address.

The "411" on 211, 311, 511 and 811.

Dial "211" or www.211la.org – "Help Starts Here" – LA County Social Services

211 LA County links ALL Los Angeles County residents to social services. It functions as a gateway to the county's vast and complex social service delivery system. 211 is a guide to resources and information needed to navigate life in Los Angeles. You can request assistance of any kind for yourself, family, friend or a stranger!

Dial "311" or www.lacity.org/311 - "One Call to City Hall"

Los Angeles Residents can simply dial 3-1-1, toll free, everyday (7am to 10pm), for information and access to more than 1500 Non-Emergency City Services, commonly used for Bulky Item Pick Up, Graffiti Removal, Barking Dog. Or download the MYLA311 app for 24-hour access to these same services and you can pay your LADWP Bill as well!

Dial "511" or www.go511.com – "Freeway Traffic Updates, One Call Away"

Southern California 511 is a free traveler information service that gives you traffic, transit and commuter service information in Southern California via a toll-free phone number and website. Check real time traffic speeds, find traffic alerts, view live traffic cameras, plan a trip on a bus or train, and even find a carpool or vanpool!

Dial "811" or www.digalert.org – "Know What's Below. Call Before you Dig"

Whether you are planning on doing it yourself or hire a professional, smart digging means call 811 before each job. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job require a call – even small projects like planting trees or shrubs.

Crime Update

Basic Car 9A5

Senior Lead Officer Lynn Whitey

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Hello everyone, can you believe that we are already approaching March? I would like to start out with our crime numbers which are looking very good coming in to 2021. Our violent crime is down -30.43% from this time last year. Our property crimes are also on the decline from last years numbers at -7.94%. Our overall part one crimes are down from last year at -13.95%. Thanks to you, our community members, who assisted us to help keep our communities safe.

Volunteers Wanted

We want you! Due to Covid our volunteer program has been somewhat on hold, but why not get a head start with the process. For information on volunteer opportunities with the LAPD, contact the Community Relation Office, Officer Jimenez at (818)374-9406. Program information including the application process as well as current volunteer opportunities will be provided. All applicants are required to be fingerprinted as part of LAPD background procedures.

Neighborhood Watch Programs

There cannot be a law enforcement officer on every corner. Resident involvement is essential to combat crime. You and your neighbors are the ones who know what is going on in your neighborhood. By cooperating with each other and with local law enforcement, people can help fight crime in their community the most effective way—*by stopping it before it begins.*

Neighbors place signs in their windows and post signs on streets to warn criminals that they are in an active crime prevention neighborhood and that “neighbors are watching out for each other.” If you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch or Business Watch in Basic Car 9A5, please send me an email and I can work with you and your group to get one started!

How Can You Reduce Auto Thefts and Break Ins

Lock ALL your car doors, and completely close ALL windows. Remove ALL valuables from inside, and never leave a spare key inside your car. Park your vehicle in a well-lit location and avoid isolated areas. Install a steering wheel locking device (the club) and be sure to install secure license plate screws. Every little bit helps! Please pass this information on to family and friends.

Remember personal security, avoid becoming a victim of crime:

- Always be aware of the people around you, and of the locations.
- Be alert of your surroundings, stay in well lighted areas, avoid door-ways, bushes and alleys.
- Make eye contact with people when walking, do not respond to conversations with strangers on the street.

We want to remind our community members to utilize the non-emergency number, 1-877-ASK-LAPD for incidents requiring immediate police assistance or for non-emergency calls.

Basic Car 9A19

Senior Lead Officer Mike Perez

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Basic Car 9A19 is starting off the year with a -45% decrease on Violent Crime, -21% decrease in Property Crime and a -28% decrease in all Part One Crimes compared to the same time last year. Again, most of the crime in Van Nuys is fueled by property crime especially auto related crimes such as Grand Theft Auto, Burglary/ Theft from motor vehicles.

Protect Your Vehicle Against Catalytic Converter Theft

Recently I have seen several reports that victims have had their vehicle's catalytic converters stolen. catalytic converters are designed to act as a line of defense against harmful exhaust system emissions by turning pollutants into harmless gasses. Thieves target catalytic converters because they contain precious metals, like platinum, palladium or rhodium, that are valuable to metal dealers. Thieves can sell them to scrap yards for up \$200 each. Thieves typically use a saw or wrench to remove it, depending on whether the catalytic converter is bolted or welded in and removal can take as little as one minute. So, what can you do to help prevent catalytic converter theft? Read on to learn more about what thieves might be looking for and tips to help protect your vehicle.

Fuel-powered vehicles manufactured after 1974 have catalytic converters. Thieves often target taller vehicles (such as pickup trucks or SUVs) because they can easily fit under the vehicle to access the catalytic converter. In Van Nuys Division most of the catalytic converters were taken from cars parked on the street for long periods of time.

You may not be able to tell your catalytic converter was stolen by looking at your car, but you will know as soon as you start the engine. When the catalytic converter has been removed, your vehicle will make a loud roaring sound that will get louder as you push the gas pedal. Your car might also make a sputtering sound as you change speed, or you'll notice it's not driving smoothly.

A victim of theft may spend up to \$2,000 getting their vehicle repaired. Consider these tips from to help protect your car from catalytic converter theft:

- When possible, park in well-lit areas and close to building entrances.
- If you have a garage at your house, park your car inside and keep the garage door shut.
- Have the catalytic converter welded to your car's frame, which may make it harder to steal.
- Consider engraving your vehicle identification number (VIN) on the catalytic converter — this may help alert a scrap dealer that it was stolen and make it easier to identify the owner.
- Calibrate your car's alarm to set off when it detects vibration.
- Install a catalytic converter cover such as Cat Security available at your local car dealer.

Understanding when your car might be a target for catalytic converter theft is the first key to preventing it. By following these protective measures, you may help deter thieves from targeting your car.

Community Clean-Ups: Volunteers Are Needed!

The Van Nuys Community Police Advisory Board (C-PAB) Blight Abatement Committee conducts regular Community Clean-Ups throughout the Van Nuys Area, Valley Glen, and Sherman Oaks communities. At a time when city resources are thin, we as a community must come together and keep our neighborhoods clean. If you would like more information about the clean-ups or to participate, please email me at 35569@lapd.online.

Neighborhood Watch!

An involved community is an informed community. If you are interested participating in a Traditional Neighborhood Watch meeting (with social distancing) or to restart an existing one, please email me at 35569@lapd.online or call at 818-731-2566.

Basic Car 9A23:

Senior Lead Officer George Lara

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To all my wonderful community members of Basic Car Area 9A23 hello and welcome to the month of March! For those of you who are new to my monthly newsletters, I am the Senior Lead Officer for the area of Sherman Way to the North down to Victory Blvd to the South and from Van Nuys Blvd to the East to the 405 Fwy to the West.

As of February 16, 2021, with a year to date comparison we have a reduction of 16.67%% in Violent Crime, Property Crime and Part 1 Crimes continue to see a decrease with 19.23% and 18.63% respectively.

For this month, I would like to provide some information and advise you of the **COMMUNITY ONLINE REPORTING SERVICE(CORS) AND TELEPHONIC REPORTS.**

The following crimes incidents can utilize the Community Online Reporting Service (CORS) as the primary reporting system if the appropriate criteria are met.

Identity Theft, when:

- The incident involved the use of a credit card, or debit card to purchase items (e.g., gasoline, hotel room, electronics, or withdraw cash).

Lost Property, when:

- Property was unintentionally left by its true owner.

Harassing/Annoying Phone Calls/Electronic Mail, when:

- Any person who repeatedly, with the intent to annoy, telephones, or makes contact by means of an electronic communication.

Hit and Run Collisions, when:

- No injury; and,
- Does not involve City property.

Traffic Collisions that involve:

- Complained of pain and/or other visible injuries; and,
- Minor damage.

Burglary/Theft from Vehicle, Plain Theft, or Petty Theft, when:

- The property taken is valued at less than, \$5000;
- Theft was not a result of a forged or counterfeit check, credit card fraud, a financial scam, or extortion;
- The property taken was not a gun; and,
- The person reporting is the owner of the property taken (e.g., individual, or employee of a business).

Grand Theft-Pickpocket when:

- The suspect is not at the scene;
- There is no possibility of locating the suspect through a limited follow up investigation by field personnel; and,
- The property taken is valued at less than \$5, 000.

Vandalism, when:

- Damage is less than \$5,000;
- Does not involve a Hate Crime;
- Does not involve Domestic Violence;
- Vandalism is not the result of gun shots;
- Does not involve a Restraining Order; or,
- Does not involve a labor dispute.

The following are not eligible for *CORS*, but are eligible for telephonic reports:

Assault or Battery, when:

- No additional battery is likely to occur; and,
- The injury, if any, does not require immediate medical attention.

Stolen Vehicle, when:

- The person reporting is the registered owner or lessee of the vehicle; and,
- The employee taking the report has verified through Department of Motor Vehicles files:
 - The registration and ownership of the vehicle;
 - The identity of the reporting person;
 - The vehicle has not been towed by an authorized authority; and,
 - The vehicle has not been reported by another responsible party (e.g., stolen, impounded, repossessed).

So, if you need to file a report and the incident meets any of the above criteria, you can visit www.lapdonline.org and click on "FILE A POLICE REPORT ONLINE". Remember that filing a false police report is a crime.

Anyone filing a false police report may be prosecuted under California Penal Code section 148.5 PC. Filing a false police report is punishable by imprisonment in county jail not exceeding 6 months, or by fine not exceeding \$1,000, or by both.

If you would like to schedule a meeting, please feel free to contact me. I am always open and available to meet. To all my business owners and managers in the area, feel free to call or e-mail so we can discuss the possibility of starting a Business Watch Group in your area.

Basic Car 9A37:

Acting Senior Lead Officer William Gutierrez

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Still can't believe that we are 3 months into the year. Things have been moving quickly and I still see a lot of improvements coming up. One of my goals is to reach out to as many of you as possible, even though we may not be able to meet in person, please consider forming neighborhood watch groups that could meet virtually on any of the available platforms.

Abandoned property, bulky items and graffiti can reported to 311, it's the easiest most effective way to get rid of these. If you see abandoned shopping carts in your neighborhood, send me an email or a text message with the information of where the shopping cart is from and I will have them come and collect it. If the abandoned property is on your lawn or within your property line, you can dispose of it as you see fit. Let's take upon ourselves and make the call to get our neighborhood cleaned up.

One of the recurring issues that we have in our area is Package Theft and Burglary from Motor Vehicles. I have also seen more Catalytic converters being stolen from Toyota Prius, and several other Honda models. I discovered that catalytic converters contain a precious metal called palladium and in 2020 the cost for one ounce was \$2,875. They also contain a metal called Rhodium which is even more valuable \$21,900 an ounce. I have seen catalytic converters being removed from your driveways. One recommendation is sensor flood lights in your driveway area. Bright light usually pushes the criminal away and let's not make ourselves and easy target. Video surveillance around your garage or driveway is also very useful. I also discovered that there are several security devices available that attach to the converter, making it harder to steal. If you have a security system on your car, adjust so that vibration sets it off.

I also want to provide you with some crime numbers as of February 18, 2021, Violent crime is down -33.33 %, Property crime is down -5.26 %, and Part 1 crimes are down -9.09 %.

Basic Car 9A41

Senior Lead Officer Kristan Delatori

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As we enter the month of March, I hope everyone is staying healthy! As of March 16, 2021, our overall Part One Crimes are down -7.78 % year to date, Violent Crime is down 47.62% and Property Crimes are up 4.35%.

Preventing Vandalism: Vandalism/Graffiti Prevention Look around your community. Do you see...

- Walls covered with graffiti?
- Knocked-over trashcans or mailboxes?
- Broken street lights?
- Spray paint on stop signs?
- Broken public telephones?
- Missing street and traffic signs?
- Writing or torn pages in library books?
- Public restrooms with broken doors and graffiti?

Vandalism Costs:

Schools pay out millions of dollars each year to clean up graffiti, repair buildings, or replace vandalized equipment. That means less money for new books, computers, sports equipment, and student activities. Local governments (and their taxpayers) pay the bills for broken street lights, stolen signs, and vandalized parks. Businesses pass the costs of vandalism on to customers through higher prices.

Vandalism Hurts:

People feel angry, sad, and frightened when something of theirs -- a mailbox, a garden, a car antenna -- is destroyed for no reason. Vandalism indirectly claims other victims -- a child is injured because a stop sign was stolen, a person can't reach 9-1-1 because the public phone is broken.

Graffiti is often the first sign that gangs are taking over a neighborhood. Gangs use graffiti as their street "telegraph," sending messages about turf and advertising their exploits. Graffiti identifies territorial boundaries, lists members, and communicates with rival gangs. The gang says, "This place belongs to us." A community's first step in taking back its streets from gangs is getting rid of graffiti immediately. This power struggle can't be won overnight, but persistent communities working in partnership with law enforcement almost always emerge as victors. Once the graffiti is gone, use landscape designs (such as prickly shrubs or closely planted hedges), building materials (such as hard-to-mark surfaces), lighting, or fences to discourage vandalism.

You Can Help Prevent Vandalism

- Educate the public, especially young people about the costs of vandalism.
- Clean up vandalism as soon as it happens -- replace signs, repair playground equipment, paint over graffiti, use the MYLA311 app or simply call 311.
- If you see anyone committing vandalism, report it to the police, school authorities, or someone who can take action. Remember, vandalism is a crime.
- Protect your house or apartment from vandalism by using good lighting and locking gates and garages.
- Support recreational programs for young people in your community. Volunteer your time, donate money or supplies, and help in any way you can.

Take a Stand!

- Tap into the energy and idealism of youth. Involve young people in all vandalism prevention efforts.
- Organize a graffiti clean-up project in your neighborhood.
- Work with Neighborhood Watch and ask the City or a local business for cleaning supplies and paint.
- Work with schools or the arts community to paint murals on areas that are vulnerable to graffiti. Make it a contest for teens.

- Adopt a street or park, perhaps in cooperation with a church or business. Plant trees, bushes, and flowers. Repair equipment and install trash containers. Organize a monthly park patrol to clean up litter and keep an eye on things.
- Have a community meeting on vandalism to discuss its victims, costs, and solutions.
- Make certain that City or town officials promptly remove abandoned cars.

For more information and tips go to LAPDONLINE.ORG

Basic Car 9A63

Acting Senior Lead Officer Armando Magana

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Hello everyone, the first month working this area has been outstanding. I have learned so many new things, not only from this position, but from the citizens as well. I have been exposed to so many things that has opened my eyes and I want to thank everyone for this opportunity to show you what I can accomplish. I have also had the pleasure of meeting so many new people and work with so many new block captains. That in its self is a great opportunity. The hard work everyone does only makes this a better place. I know I greatly appreciate it.

With this great feeling, I am pleased to report that the numbers are still down across the board. The hard work everyone is putting in is working. We continue to see a drop-in crime in the area. I don't think this is attributed to only one part of the team. Together as a community, we continue to show everyone that teamwork is the answer. As of February 13, 2021, the numbers for Violent Crimes is still down year to date is around -23.08% Although it's still the beginning of the year, I feel we can keep this trend going. Property Crimes area also showing a drop due to the diligence of the citizens in the area. Property Crimes are hovering around -4.40%. They seem to be creeping up, so let's stay on top of our property. Lastly, Part 1 Crimes area also down. We area right around -6.73%. Some may see these numbers as low, but I know as a community we can do better. Only working together, can we accomplish this goal.

As I have mentioned, a close community will absolutely be beneficial. I will continue to provide information as it becomes available to me. But know that I will also be available to answer questions. As issues arise, there are things to remember...

- Call 911 for emergencies and 877-ASK-LAPD for non-emergencies.
- My311LA application is a great way to get that graffiti of the walls or bulky items left on the street.
- LAPDONLINE.ORG is a fast and efficient way to file a report.
- LAHOP.COM is a great resource if you see someone experiencing homelessness. Just submit a referral and they will be contacted.
- Remember to lock your vehicles and not leave items visible. LOCK IT, HIDE IT, KEEP IT!!

As always, I will make myself available for matters of concern. Also, I will always be in the area if you need to address an issue or just want to say HI!! As always, stay vigilant and be kind to each other. TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK!!!

Basic Car 9A89

Senior Lead Officer Jose Saldana

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Basic Car 9A89 covers the southern portion of Sherman Oaks and a small portion of Studio City. As of February 2021, Basic Car 9A89 is down -6.82 % in Property Crimes year-to-date and Violent Crimes year-to-date an increase of 125% from last year.

We have noticed an increase in package thefts these past few months, track you package and attempt to be home when the package arrives, or have it delivered to a safe storage location.

Please e-mail me any suspicious activity in the form of videos or photos. This can be our most significant source of information for developing leads on open cases. Please help us help you by being aware of what is going on in your neighborhood. Remember, the best way to avoid becoming a victim yourself is to remove all valuables from your vehicle every time you leave it. Do not leave anything that is not attached to your vehicle in plain sight. Make sure your cars and homes are locked and secured using as many crime prevention tools as possible.

For information on volunteer opportunities with the LAPD, email Officer Jason Jimenez in the Community Relations Office at 38903@lapd.online, or call (818) 374-5420. Program Information, the application process, and current volunteer opportunities will be provided. All applicants are required to be fingerprinted as part of LAPD background procedures.

The City of Los Angeles has developed a program called Ready Your LA Neighborhood (RYLAN) to help your family and your neighborhood prepare for disasters.

RYLAN gives you the steps to take immediately after a disaster to help keep you and your family safe. It provides the tools to prepare and organize your neighborhood to respond together in that first hour after a disaster to reduce injuries, protect your property, the environment, and most importantly, to save lives. For more information go to website <http://emergency.lacity.org>.

Remember, Nextdoor.com, Twitter, and your SLO's City cell phone/email is not for reporting crimes or for generating radio calls. For non-emergencies call 1-877-ASK-LAPD (1-877-275-5273), and for emergencies dial 911. Please refrain from calling the front desk if you need officers to come out on a radio call. The front desk officers are here to take telephonic reports and answer questions, not dispatch calls.

Crime Prevention Tips

- ***IF YOU'RE HOME AND SOMEONE KNOCKS OR RINGS YOUR DOORBELL, DO NOT IGNORE IT.*** Would be burglars like to knock to determine if someone is home before attempting to break in. So, please make sure you verbally acknowledge the person without opening the door. If you have not invited someone to your home, you should not open the door for them.
- ***SECURITY AND/OR DOOR BELL SYSTEMS WITH VIDEO*** are becoming an affordable option to help reduce your chances of becoming a victim. Please consider these options to protect your home.
- ***DON'T LEAVE YOUR KEYS IN YOUR VEHICLES.*** Whether you are tandem parked, parked in a garage, or just going inside for a moment (i.e. gas station, your home, etc.), do not leave your keys in your vehicles.

- ***STEERING WHEEL LOCKS.*** 1990's Toyota's and Honda's are some of the most common vehicles stolen. These vehicles have door locks and ignitions that are easily compromised. Steering wheel locks are good tools to assist in deterring criminals from taking these vehicles.
- ***LOCK YOUR CAR AND PARK IT IN A GARAGE OR LIGHTED AREA.*** Make it difficult to get into your car. If it is outside, make your car as visible as possible. Do not leave anything valuable or visible in your vehicles.
- ***LOCK YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS*** when you leave the house. Close your blinds/drapes so no one can see into your house. Keep every part of your residence locked and secured, including your garage. Strategic lighting can also assist with crime prevention.
- ***DON'T LEAVE EXPENSIVE ITEMS OUT,*** place them in a drawer, safe, or somewhere else out of sight.
- ***TAKE YOUR ELECTRONIC ITEMS OUT OF YOUR CAR,*** this includes your cell phones, computer tablets, other portable electronics, and chargers.
- ***SHOPPING CART.*** Do not leave your purses in the shopping cart while loading your vehicles.

March Fun Fact:

March is national Women's History Month, Across the U.S. there are 900,000 sworn law enforcement officers. Women make up 12 percent.

In 1909, Los Angeles social worker Alice Stebbins Wells petitioned Mayor George Alexander and the City Council, requesting that an ordinance providing for a Los Angeles Policewoman be adopted. Not only was the measure passed, but on September 12, 1910, Mrs. Wells was appointed as the nation's first female policewoman with arrest powers.

Today, one out of five officers in the LAPD are women.