

# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

**Fountain Valley Police Department**  
10200 Slater Avenue, Fountain Valley CA 92708  
Paul A. Sorrell, Chief of Police

## Police Phone Numbers

Non-Emergency: 714-593-4485 / 714-593-4486  
Watch Commander: 714-593-4487  
Crime Prevention Office: 714-593-4526  
Crime in Progress: 9-1-1

## Neighborhood Watch

Office: 714-593-4488  
Report Graffiti: 714-593-4604

## Summer 2011 Issue

### A few words from Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Mrs. Patty Keith

**BRRR!** It's been a cold winter!

We have been warm and cozy in our homes with our windows shut and locked! Now, the weather has warmed up and it's time to open up the windows for fresh air. Don't forget to close and lock them as you leave your home. The burglars are watching, and an open window is an invitation to come into your home!



Be a step ahead – Don't let yourself become a victim to crime. Be aware!

Patty Keith

## COYOTES!!

This time of year coyotes will be seen in ALL areas of Orange County. A coyote will behave similar to domestic dogs that are defending their territory and family. If you encounter a coyote that behaves aggressively, you have gotten too close. Therefore, it is important to leave a comfortable distance between you and a coyote.

### Basic reminders that we ask everyone to be mindful of include:

- Remove food sources from outside your home.
- Store dog and cat food inside your garage or home – keep it covered.
- Pick up ripened fruit that has fallen to the ground.
- Cover trashcans.
- Bring cats and small animals inside at night.
- Do not leave food out for stray animals, particularly cats, as they will attract coyotes into your neighborhood.
- Encourage your neighbors to take these steps.

If you observe a coyote in town, please call the Fountain Valley Police Department at 714-593-4485/86 to report the sighting. Additionally, you can learn more by logging on to our website, [www.fvpd.org](http://www.fvpd.org), which has links to both the California Fish and Game website and the Orange County Animal Care website. Both websites contain helpful information.

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## **“EVERY 15 MINUTES PROGRAM”**

**WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THE “EVERY 15 MINUTES” PROGRAM**

INTERACTIVE IDEAS, HYUNDAI, KINGSTON TECHNOLOGY, NOBLES FAMILY FOUNDATION, FV COURTYARD MARRIOTT, CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL, CA OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY, FV FIRE DEPARTMENT, FV STONEFIRE GRILL, PCTA CHANNEL 3 TV, JMG SECURITY SYSTEMS, JAY’S CATERING, DILDAY BROTHERS MORTUARY, OC CORONERS OFFICE, R.A.C.E.S., A & B TOWING, C.A.R.E. AMBULANCE, SPARKLETTS WATER, BEST OF THE BEST PARTY RENTALS, WEST JUSTICE COURT, OC DISTRICT ATTORNEYS OFFICE, KNOTT’S BERRY FARM MAKE-UP ARTISTS, LAHS PRINCIPAL, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, EFM STUDENTS AND PARENTS, FV POLICE OFFICER’S ASSOCIATION, ORANGE COAST MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER, FV REGIONAL HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER, FV FOUNDERS VILLAGE SENIOR CENTER, GRIM REAPERS, FV WHOLESALE FLOWERS, FV POLICE PCO’S/CADETS/EXPLORERS/AIDES/RSVP’S AND POLICE CHAPLAINS

**TAKE A BITE OUT OF  
CRIME®**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**

**The Fountain Valley Police Department and Recreation & Community Services Division are working together to present:**

### **NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2011 AND MOVIE IN THE PARK**

**FEATURING: Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs**  
Fountain Valley Recreation Center and Sports Park  
16400 Brookhurst Street

**Tuesday, August 2, 2011; FESTIVITIES start at 5:00 p.m.**  
**“National Night Out”**

**A program designed to:**

Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness and to generate participation in local crime prevention programs; strengthen police-community partnerships and to send a message to criminals that neighbors are fighting back! Neighborhood Watch and Crime Prevention personnel and volunteers will be available to discuss crime prevention. We will have Fountain Valley Fire and Police personnel available, including West County SWAT, Motorcycle Officers and a K9 Demonstration. Police Explorers will provide free child fingerprinting, and McGruff, the crime fighting dog, will be in attendance. There will be clowns, face painting and games for the kids, including a kid bouncer! You are encouraged to bring chairs and blankets for the movie. Popcorn and hotdogs provided FREE until we run out. Visit [www.NATW.org](http://www.NATW.org) for further details.

## **GOING ON VACATION?**

The Fountain Valley Police Department offers a great service to our residents... VACATION HOUSE CHECKS. The retired senior volunteers (RSVP) will check on your home while you are on vacation. You may register for this service at the Police Department or on our website at [fvpd.org](http://fvpd.org).

# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

## Senior Citizens Be Aware Of Fraud Schemes

- Senior citizens are most likely to have a “nest egg;” for example, they own their own home and/or they have excellent credit, both of which make them attractive to con artists.
- People who grew up in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s were generally raised to be polite and trusting. Con artists exploit these traits, knowing that is difficult or impossible for these individuals to say “no” or to just hang up the telephone.
- Senior citizens are less likely to report crimes, for example, because they are concerned that relatives may think they no longer have the mental capacity to take care of their own financial affairs.
- When an elderly victim does report the crime, they often make poor witnesses. Con artists know the effects of age on memory, and they are counting on elderly victims not being able to supply enough detailed information to investigators. In addition, the victims’ realization that they have been swindled may take weeks or, more likely, months after contact with the con artist. This extended time frame makes it even more difficult to remember details from the events.
- Senior citizens are more interested in and susceptible to products promising increased cognitive function, virility, physical conditioning, anti-cancer properties, and so on. In a country where new cures and vaccinations for old diseases have given every American hope for a long and fruitful life, it is not so unbelievable that the con artists’ products can do what they claim.

## Common Scams to Avoid

The Police Department has received calls from our citizens regarding scams that they have fallen victim to. Two common scams that we have been made aware of are mentioned below with information received from the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) website:

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C), and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). IC3’s mission is to serve as a vehicle to receive, develop, and refer criminal complaints regarding the rapidly expanding arena of cyber crime. The IC3 gives the victims of cyber crime a convenient and easy-to-use reporting mechanism that alerts authorities of suspected criminal or civil violations. For law enforcement and regulatory agencies at the federal, state, local and international level, IC3 provides a central referral mechanism for complaints involving Internet related crimes.

### Friend/Family Member in Need

The IC3 continues to receive reports of individuals’ e-mail or social networking accounts being compromised and used in a social engineering scam to swindle consumers out of thousands of dollars. The notice claims the victim is in immediate need of money due to being robbed of their credit cards, passport, money, and cell phone or due to being arrested in another country and in need of bail money, leaving them stranded in London or some other location. Some claim they only have a few days to pay their hotel bill and promise to reimburse upon their return home. A sense of urgency to help their friend/contact may cause the recipient to fail to validate the claim, increasing the likelihood of them falling for this scam. If you receive a similar notice and are not sure it is a scam, you should always verify the information before sending any money.

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TAKE A BITE OUT OF  
**CRIME**<sup>®</sup>

## Lottery Schemes

The IC3 continues to receive reports of letters and e-mails being distributed pursuant to prize sweepstakes or lottery schemes. These schemes use counterfeit checks that bear legitimate-looking logos of various financial institutions to fool victims into sending money to the con artist.

Con artists tell victims they won a sweepstakes or lottery, but to receive a lump sum payout, they must pay the taxes and processing fees up front. Con artists direct individuals to call a telephone number to initiate a letter of instruction. The letter alleges that the victim may elect to take an advance

on the winnings to make the required up-front payment. The letter includes a check in the amount of the alleged taxes and fees, along with the processing instructions. Ultimately, victims believe they are using the advance to make the required up-front payment, but in reality they are falling prey to the scheme. The victim deposits the check into their own bank, which credits the account for the amount of the check before the check clears. The victim immediately withdraws the money and wires it to the con artist. Afterwards, the check proves to be counterfeit and the bank pulls the respective funds from the victim's account, leaving the victim liable for the amount of the counterfeit check plus any additional fees the bank may charge. Persons may fall victim to this scheme due to the allure of easy money and the apparent legitimacy of the check the con artists include in the letter of instruction. The alleged cash prizes and locations of the financial institutions vary.

## Gift Cards

Gift cards are the most requested gift every year, and this year will be no exception. Stick to the source when you buy one; scammers like to auction off gift cards on sites like eBay with little or no funds on them upon arrival.

Tips to Avoid Being Scammed:

- A federal statute prohibits mailing lottery tickets, advertisements, or payments to purchase tickets in a foreign lottery.
- Be leery if you do not remember entering a lottery or sweepstakes.
- Beware of lotteries or sweepstakes that charge a fee prior to delivering your prize.
- Be wary of demands to send additional money as a requirement to be eligible for future winnings.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Be very wary if ever asked to send money out of the country.

If you have been a victim of this type of scam or any other cyber crime, you can report it to the IC3 at [IC3.gov](http://IC3.gov). The IC3 complaint database links complaints for potential referral to law enforcement for case consideration. Complaint information is also used to identify emerging trends and patterns to alert the public to new criminal schemes.

For additional information on common scams to avoid, please visit the FVPD website at [www.fvdpd.org](http://www.fvdpd.org).  
Resource: <http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud>

**LOOK FOR THE NEXT ISSUE COMING IN FALL 2011**