

2008 Herman Goldstien Award for Excellence in Problem Oriented Policing

The “Keep Houston Safe” Public Safety Campaign in coordination with the I-10 East Freeway Crime Prevention Initiative

Submitted by the Houston Police Department

Summary

Scanning - The I-10 East Freeway corridor, with its high concentration of businesses, restaurants and strip centers, attracts large numbers of patrons. Unfortunately, the area also attracts criminal perpetrators from not just the surrounding neighborhoods, but other parts of Houston and the adjacent areas of Harris County and Jacinto City. The result is elevated crime along the freeway corridor that spills over into the surrounding neighborhoods. Through August 2007, total UCR Part I crime in police district 9 has increased 14.55% as compared to the same period in 2006. Police beat 9C40, which extends east from 11,800 East Freeway, accounts for half or more of all part I crimes in district 9. Specific crimes with increases year to date through August are murder + 71.23%, aggravated assault + 8.52%, theft +3.56%, burglary + 40.08%, and auto theft +40.59%. Auto related crimes, when including burglary of motor vehicles, are by far the most prevalent. Of concern is recent increases in aggravated assaults and robberies.

Analysis - Aware of the continuing crime increases in 9 district and the I-10 East Freeway corridor, an exploratory meeting was held at the Northeast Division on August 17, 2007 with several of the property owners and business managers in the area as well as members of the Auto Theft Division. The topic of discussion; **would the business**

community be interested in working collaboratively with the Northeast Division to positively impact crime and public safety along the I-10 East Freeway corridor? The

Answer was an enthusiastic **Yes!** The consensus of this first organizing meeting included:

- organizing the businesses along the I-10 East Freeway Corridor and hold regular meetings.
- Work collaboratively to utilize our joint resources to increase public awareness and reduce crime
- Develop a positive public safety campaign with a big kickoff supported by signs and crime prevention handouts
- Develop and implement an email crime alert network.

Response - Organize the business and residential communities along the I-10 East Freeway corridor to work in partnership with the Houston Police Department during this campaign, crime reduction initiative and on a on-going basis in the future. Develop and implement an e-mail/phone tree crime alert network that all participants can access.

Positive Highly Visible Public Safety Campaign:

Rather than emphasize the elevated crime in the area, develop and utilize a positive message that the local businesses, residents and the city can rally around to encourage public awareness to prevent crime and to get involved. Kickoff the public safety campaign, as the crime reduction initiative is implemented, in a high profile ceremony/event with many dignitaries and large community turn out. Following the ceremony, deploy our officers and the Mobile Command Post to generate public

awareness, establish police presence and as a base of operations for the initiative and to hand out material. **“Keep Houston Safe”** is an extremely positive message that can be used for on-going citywide public awareness, crime prevention, community involvement efforts, not just for this Northeast crime initiative.

Various Police Tactical and Directed Operations:

Assessment

- Total crime reduction of 35% for Aggravated Assault, Auto Theft, BMV, Burglary of Building, Burglary of habitation, Homicide and Robbery. 33% Total crime reductions have maintained November 07- May 07.
- 3258 Citizens pledged and participated with the “Keep Houston Safe” campaign.
- “Keep Houston Safe” campaign adopted by Chief of Police Harold Hurtt as department program to be implemented citywide. Three initiatives have been completed with a fourth underway and others planned.

Scanning

For many years, large portions of the Northeast Division have experienced an extraordinarily high rate of crime at a constant and steady level. The criminal element established in many areas has lead to a generalized perception by the public that they are destined to live in an unsafe and squalid environment. When patrol officers are constantly dispatched back to the same areas in response to the same crimes committed over and over again, excessive police resources are utilized. In addition to the drain this puts on our police resources, this has also lowered the confidence that the public has in

the Northeast Division's ability to provide them with a safe environment in which to raise their families.

The Northeast Division has identified numerous Katrina evacuee-housing complexes in the Northeast Division's area of responsibility that are locations of excessive criminal activity. These areas are heavily populated with hard-core drug dealers who have entrenched themselves in these areas because they have proven to be profitable. Drug dealers loiter on the corners where they actively solicit buyers to sell their drugs to. Drug users populate the areas where they often commit criminal activities to gain the funds to support their addictions, a self-perpetuating loop of drug addictions = criminal activity = drug dealing = drug addictions.

The abundant availability of crack-cocaine in the area has an underlying link to the high incidence of prostitution. Prostitution proliferates in the area because drug-using prostitutes have easy access to the availability of crack-cocaine and to the constant flow of clientele who enter the area to purchase narcotics as well.

Local businesses and their customers are frequently targeted for burglaries, thefts, and robberies. Drug users and prostitutes frequent the areas and loiter in the parking lots of local businesses where they contribute to the visual blight by engaging in promiscuous and illegal behavior.

Although Katrina evacuees perpetuate a large ratio of criminal activity, it is important to note that many evacuees are victims of crime and are due the same rights to a safe environment as everyone else in the community.

Recently, the Northeast Division has been experiencing a significant increase in the number of auto thefts and BMVs in the area of the 12000 to 13000 blocks of the East Freeway. This corridor is located within 9C40's beat and is largely comprised of strip center businesses to include Fiesta, Home Depot, Academy Sports and Outdoors, Sam's, and Bennigan's. There are many Katrina apartment complexes that are located in the immediate area of the East Freeway Corridor. Specifically, ten apartment complexes have been identified as recurrent problem complexes where the criminal activity has become persistent and excessive.

Identification of the problem – Officers of the Northeast Division began to experience a continuing increase in Part I crimes, particularly auto theft, burglary of motor vehicles, burglary of business and residential during 2007. The area most impacted is from approximately 11,000 I-10 East Freeway Eastward to the city limits at approximately 13,600 East Freeway. This area includes all of beat 9C40 and a portion of beat 9C30. The area is primarily strip centers and large businesses along the Freeway surrounded by residential areas and some apartments. A central concentration of crime is Federal/Maxey Road at 12,500 I-10 East Freeway and running on Maxey to Wallisville Road. This location, particularly Maxey at Fleming, has a concentration of apartments. Ten of these apartments have Katrina relocations.

Crime issues in the I-10 East Freeway corridor are not new. They have risen in the past and have been addressed with various initiatives only to return. Typically the businesses and neighborhoods have done what they could individually, while the police conducted various short-term tactical and other directed police initiatives. This program proposed that a long-term total community approach be implemented in conjunction with a highly visible and positive public safety campaign. The goals are to reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime, and improve the quality of life while maintaining the public safety improvements after the crime initiative has ended.

Analysis

Northeast Patrol has experienced a continuing increase in Part I crimes, particularly auto theft, burglary of motor vehicles, burglary of business and residential during 2007. The area most impacted is from approximately 11,000 I-10 East Freeway Eastward to the city limits at approximately 13,600 East Freeway. This area includes all of beat 9C40 and a portion of beat 9C30. The area is primarily strip centers and large businesses along the Freeway surrounded by residential areas and some apartments. A central concentration of crime is Federal/Maxey Road at 12,500 I-10 East Freeway and running on Maxey to Wallisville Road. This location, particularly Maxey at Fleming, has a concentration of apartments. Ten of these apartments have Katrina relocations.

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and neighborhoods have done what they could individually, while the police conducted various short-term tactical and other directed police initiatives. This correspondence proposes that a long-term total community approach be implemented in conjunction with a highly visible and positive public safety campaign. The main goals being of reducing crime, reducing the fear of crime, improving the quality of life and maintaining the public safety improvements after the crime initiative has ended.

The I-10 East Freeway corridor, with its high concentration of businesses, restaurants and strip centers, attracts large numbers of patrons. Unfortunately, the area also attracts criminal perpetrators from not just the surrounding neighborhoods, but other parts of Houston and the adjacent areas of Harris County and Jacinto City. The result is elevated crime along the freeway corridor that spills over into the surrounding neighborhoods. Through August 2007, total UCR Part I crime in police district 9 has increased 14.55% as compared to the same period in 2006. Police beat 9C40, which extends east from 11,800 East Freeway, accounts for half or more of all part I crimes in district 9. Specific crimes with increases year to date through August are murder + 71.23%, aggravated assault + 8.52%, theft +3.56%, burglary + 40.08%, and auto theft +40.59%. Auto related crimes, when including burglary of motor vehicles, are by far the most prevalent. Of concern is recent increases in aggravated assaults and robberies.

Aware of the continuing crime increases in 9 district and the I-10 East Freeway corridor, an exploratory meeting was held at the Northeast Division on August 17, 2007 with several of the property owners and business managers in the area, as well as Captain

McKinney of the Auto Theft Division. The consensus of this first organizing meeting included; organize the businesses along the I-10 East Freeway Corridor and hold regular meetings; work collaboratively to utilize our joint resources to increase public awareness and reduce crime; develop a positive public safety campaign with a big kickoff supported by signs and crime prevention handouts; develop and implement an email crime alert network.

Following this exploratory meeting the concept of a public safety campaign to “Help keep Houston safe” was discussed with Captain Williams of the Public Affairs Division. The slogan “**Keep Houston Safe**” was born. Public Affairs agreed to develop artwork for the slogan and assist with preparation for future meetings and a kickoff event.

The major components of the campaign and initiative are as follows:

Organize the business and residential communities along the I-10 East Freeway corridor to work in partnership with the Houston Police Department during this campaign, crime reduction initiative and on a on-going basis in the future. Develop and implement an e-mail/phone tree crime alert network that all participants can access.

Goal:

To reduce auto theft, BMV, Burglary building, burglary habitation, robbery and aggravated assault by **10 to 20%** during the initiative. To maintain the reductions for at least 6 months. A reduction in the fear of crime and improved quality of life are anticipated as a result of the campaign and the initiative.

Policing Strategies:

In addition to public awareness and high visibility, other tactical and directed activities will be conducted to achieve the crime reduction goal.

Multi Agency and Multi Divisional:

The Harris County Sheriffs department and Jacinto City PD are involved. Each jurisdiction runs adjacent the target area and will be affected by the crime reduction initiative. From the Houston Police Department the following are involved: Northeast Division, Public Affairs Division, Auto Theft Division, and the Burglary and Theft Division.

Response

Total Community Approach:

Organize the business and residential communities along the I-10 East Freeway corridor to work in partnership with the Houston Police Department during this campaign, crime reduction initiative and on a on-going basis in the future. Develop and implement an e-mail/phone tree crime alert network that all participants can access. As a supplement to the increased police presence, the M.C.O.P (Mobile Community Outreach Program RV) Command Post will be utilized at identified locations. Officers of the Northeast Differential Response Team will man the Command Post at designated locations and work in conjunction with the patrol officers assigned to the uniformed saturation squads.

The Command Post will serve as added police presence as well as to provide a processing area for arrests and paperwork.

Additional DRT responsibilities will include checking and confirming that area businesses have valid trespass affidavits on file and updating those locations that do not. The Northeast Division's DRT has established an excellent relationship with many business owners in the Northeast's area of responsibility. At local Civic Club meetings the DRT will solicit information from those in attendance to provide any and all information about crime problems in their areas. The DRT will utilize the relationships that they have with these merchants to foster relationships with other local businesses who have yet to come on board. Business owners and the public will be encouraged at the Civic Club meetings to approach the Mobile Command Post when they see it in their area and to interact with the officers in a positive and productive manner. In addition to promoting better relationships between the police and the public, viable and important crime information can be gained.

Positive Highly Visible Public Safety Campaign:

Rather than emphasize the elevated crime in the area, develop and utilize a positive message that the local businesses, residents and the city can rally around to encourage public awareness to prevent crime and to get involved. Kickoff the public safety campaign, as the crime reduction initiative is implemented, in a high profile ceremony/event with many dignitaries and large community turn out. Following the ceremony, deploy our officers and the Mobile Command Post to generate public

awareness, establish police presence and as a base of operations for the initiative and to hand out material. **“Keep Houston Safe”** is an extremely positive message that can be used for on-going citywide public awareness, crime prevention, community involvement efforts, not just for this Northeast crime initiative.

Policing Strategies – Part One:

The Northeast Divisional Tactical Unit will conduct various operations to include undercover decoy operations, prostitution operations, warrant executions, targeted offender surveillance, and targeted location surveillance. The Northeast DTU has extensive training and experience in conducting such operations and has been extremely successful in the apprehension of many suspects utilizing undercover operations. The DTU sergeant and/or lieutenant will oversee all undercover operations. The DTU sergeant or lieutenant will have the responsibility of moving any operation from one location to another, should the need arise. The ability to remain fluid is essential and will be at the discretion of the DTU sergeant or lieutenant. The DTU sergeant will maintain oversight of all productivity relative to this program.

BMV- Decoy Operations:

The DTU will place bait items such as laptops, purses, and bicycles, in undercover police vehicles and park those vehicles at targeted locations. To prevent damage to the bait vehicle, either a window will be left rolled down or the doors will be left unlocked to

allow for nondestructive entry into the vehicle. Undercover DTU officers will maintain surveillance on the vehicles. Once the bait items have been stolen from the vehicle, fully uniformed DTU officers will be utilized to affect the arrests.

At no time, will an undercover officer be utilized to affect an arrest. All BMV decoy operations will be video taped for prosecution purposes.

Auto Theft Decoy Operations:

Bait vehicles, equipped with GPS tracking devices and “kill switches” will be placed at identified locations where crime analysis indicates high incidents of auto thefts. These vehicles will be placed at specified locations and monitored by undercover DTU officers.

As with the BMV operation, either a window will be left rolled down or the doors will be left unlocked to allow for non-destructive entry into the vehicle. The keys will also be left in the ignition to also provide a non- destructive way to start the ignition.

As soon as the suspect makes his attempted get-a-way, undercover DTU officers will utilize the remote ignition kill switch to stop the ignition of the vehicle and fully uniformed DTU officers in marked Houston Police vehicles will affect the arrest. Proper Departmental felony stop procedures will be adhered to at all times. At no time, will an undercover officer be utilized to affect the arrest. All auto theft decoy operations will be video taped for prosecution purposes.

Prostitution Operations:

Plain clothed DTU officers will be utilized to make prostitution cases on prostitutes who solicit men for sex in the area. Prostitution and Public Lewdness will be the primary focus; however, possession of controlled substance, warrants and/or any other violation will be accounted for as well.

Warrant Execution:

Utilizing information provided by the Northeast Crime Analysis Division, officers of the Warrant Execution Team (WET) will identify wanted suspects who reside or frequent the identified locations. Fully uniformed WET officers will conduct warrant round-ups throughout these areas. Additionally, the WET will utilize the Fuginet Database to identify and arrest any parole violators in the targeted area.

Targeted Offender Surveillance:

By way of information provided by the Northeast Crime Analysis Unit, repeat felony offenders will be identified. Mug shots and criminal histories will be provided to the DTU officers so surveillance can be made on these suspects should the undercover officers spot them.

Targeted Location Surveillance:

Specific locations which have historically experienced a significantly high volume of BMV and auto theft incidents and which are conducive for surveillance from a remote or elevated position will be identified by crime analysis. Undercover DTU officers will conduct surveillance utilizing video equipment to record criminal activity. Fully uniformed officers in marked Houston Police vehicles will be called in to affect all arrests.

Part Two- Uniformed Saturation:

Uniformed patrol officers will aggressively patrol the identified locations with the emphasis on Class C and higher arrests. The officers will enforce all City Ordinances including loitering, public intoxication, public lewdness, and criminal trespassing. Enforcement of Class C violations often lead to bigger arrests when a subject is found to be in possession of a controlled substance or to have city, felony, or SETCIC warrants. By enforcing the loitering and trespassing ordinances, we minimize the amount of would-be narcotics buyers and sellers in the area. Additionally, street level prostitution should decrease significantly when the prostitutes are not permitted to loiter on private property where they intend to solicit men for prostitution.

Traffic Enforcement:

Traffic enforcement will be utilized to stop traffic violators in the area. Establishing probable cause with traffic violations may reveal suspects who have warrants for their arrest or other charges. Enhanced traffic enforcement should be a deterrent for those who are driving through the area for illegitimate reasons.

The idea is to make the identified locations uncomfortable and unprofitable for all criminals and to disrupt the routines of the hardened criminals who have entrenched themselves in the area.

Assessment

This section describes the activation and the initial phase of the “Keep Houston Safe” Crime Reduction Initiative. It specifies the strategies utilized to achieve the goals of reducing Auto Thefts, Burglary of Motor Vehicles (BMV), Robberies, Burglary of a Building, Burglary of a Habitation and assaults by ten percent. Other goals included the apprehension of wanted felons, reduce calls for service and response times, and develop a mutual and beneficial community relationship between local merchants and law enforcement. The targeted area of 9C40’s beat consists of the East Freeway Corridor. This encompasses the 11,000 to the 13,500 blocks of the East Freeway and several Katrina evacuee apartment complexes located in the immediate area of the East Freeway corridor. Due to the concerns of local businesses and civic groups, the Northeast Division worked to develop and implement a strategy that would utilize the Auto Theft

and Burglary & Theft Division, and R408 Crime Initiative overtime to impact public safety issues.

The targeted area encompassed at least four apartment complexes, residential, and numerous area businesses. Over the last year, this area had been experiencing an escalation of crime. Examples of crimes experienced included Assaults, Auto Thefts, BMV's, Burglaries, and Robberies.

There were two phases to this initiative. The first phase utilized the Northeast Divisional Tactical Unit (DTU), Warrant Execution Team (WET), and Differential Response Team (DRT) to conduct undercover bait car operations and warrant executions. This was done simultaneously with uniformed officers and community participation to "Keep Houston Safe" along the East Freeway Corridor. The second phase was the enforcement phase; this included uniformed overtime officers in Hot Spot Units from the Northeast Division. A summation of these phases will be detailed later in this report.

The results of this initiative are presented in this report under the Arrest Summary. The goals of this operation were to reduce targeted crime by 10 to 20% in the East Freeway Corridor, and all of beat 9C40. Attached, is a statistical summary report by the Northeast Division Crime Analysis Unit detailing pre and post-operation crime activity.

Phase One of the “Keep Houston Safe” Crime Reduction Initiative began in October 2007. Northeast DTU, WET, DRT conducted this portion of the operation and uniformed patrol officers were assigned to sector patrols.

HPD’s Mobile Command Post was utilized on more than fifty occasions at various business locations along the East Freeway Corridor in an attempt to establish a relationship with local businesses while providing citizens with information useful in combating BMV’s and Robberies.

The uniformed patrol portion of this initiative consisted of two parts: marked units and bicycle patrol units. Marked units were assigned sectors to patrol that would not compromise tactical undercover operations, but would demonstrate presence in the area. These units were responsible for completing BMV report cards and placing them on citizen’s vehicles. These units were also expected to make citizen contacts to create a sense of safety among business owners and citizens. The bike patrol units manned the HPD Mobile Command Post that was strategically parked at busy strip centers. The officers passed out “Keep Houston Safe” literature and addressed any crime concerns brought to their attention by citizens and community participation.

Phase Two of the operation began October 30, 2007, through Monday, January 9, 2008. This phase of the operation was kicked off by a press conference announcing the enforcement phase of the R408 Crime Reduction Initiative and Keep Houston Safe. This phase of the operation left all original units intact, plus added two-man Hot Spot units to

the uniformed patrol side of the operation. Tactical units initiated a zero-tolerance approach to combating the targeted crimes and areas. The uniformed patrol aspect of the operation took a more gradual escalation toward its zero-tolerance approach, implementing the two-man Hot Spot units to aggressively patrol the East Freeway Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. Simultaneously, bike patrol and other patrol units maintained the community service presence in the targeted areas.

Enforcement activities included traffic enforcement, narcotics investigations, BMV investigation, Prostitution, Auto Theft, and warrant sweeps. The goals were to reduce total crime and remove targeted offenders.

Tactical teams utilized bait vehicles in targeted areas along the East Freeway Corridor. The operation consisted of an undercover BMV-decoy vehicle, where bait items such as laptops, purses and bicycles were left in undercover police vehicles at targeted locations. Undercover Tactical Team officers maintained surveillance on the vehicles. Once the bait items had been stolen from the vehicle, fully uniformed tactical officers would move in and effect the arrest. Uniformed patrol officers handled any calls for service that dropped in the area and conducted any necessary follow-ups to eliminate any actual or perceived criminal problems.

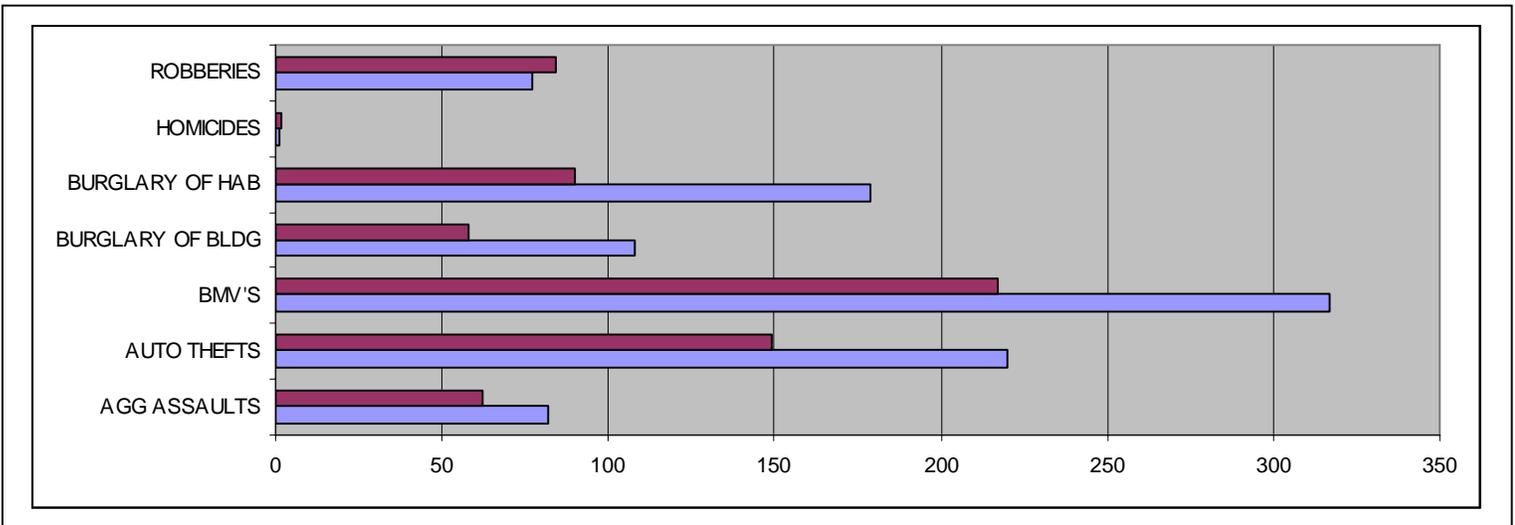
CONCLUSION

- The goals of the “Keep Houston Safe” Crime Reduction Initiative were met by reducing total targeted crimes by 35%. Other goals included the apprehension of wanted felons and to develop a mutual and beneficial community relationship between local merchants and law enforcement. To date, an after action evaluation indicates overall Part 1 Crimes and calls for service have been reduced and have exceeded expectations. Community relationships have been established and are being maintained. A maintenance program and monitoring are currently to maintain the gains in 9C40’s beat.
- “Keep Houston Safe” campaign adopted by Chief Harold Hurtt as department program to be implemented citywide. Three initiatives have been completed with a fourth underway and others planned.

Results of other Keep Houston Safe Initiatives

- Denver Harbor (9C20) February-March 2008– 27%
- Central Patrol (2A10) April-May 2008– 28%
- Southeast in progress

9C40's Beat Crime Comparison				
DATES	CRIME	2006-2007	2007-2008	% CHANG
Comparison of Nov '06-May '07 and Nov '07-May '08	AGG ASSAULTS	82	62	-24%
	AUTO THEFTS	220	149	-32%
	BMV'S	317	217	-32%
	BURGLARY OF BLDG	108	58	-46%
	BURGLARY OF HAB	179	90	-50%
	HOMICIDES	1	2	100%
	ROBBERIES	77	84	9%
	TOTAL	984	662	-33%





PASS

Congratulations!
Your vehicle has
Passed a random
inspection.

Your actions can help your
local Police Department to
deter crime.

Officer: _____

Date Inspected: _____

FAIL

PASS FAIL

DOOR UNLOCKED

Window Open or
Cracked

Packages or Valuables
in plain view

OTHER: _____

Officer: _____

Date Inspected: _____

This report card is part of the
Theft Reduction Program.
We thank you for correcting any
issues found. Please advise
your friends and family to secure
and protect their property.

Questions or comments can be
directed to the following police stations:

- AIRPORT - HOU 713-845-6800
- AIRPORT - IAH 281-230-6800
- CENTRAL 713-247-4400
- CLEAR LAKE 281-218-3800
- EASTSIDE 713-928-4600
- FONDREN 713-773-7900
- KINGWOOD 281-913-4500
- NORTH 281-405-5300
- NORTHEAST 713-635-0200
- NORTHWEST 713-744-0900
- SOUTH CENTRAL 713-651-8100
- SOUTHEAST 713-731-5000
- SOUTHWEST 713-314-3900
- SPECIAL OPS. 832-394-0000
- WESTSIDE 281-584-4700

Theft Reduction Report Card

Houston Police Department



KEEP

Houston

Safe



BE AWARE--- BE AWARE-- BE AWARE
Of Your Surroundings At All Times



Keep all valuables and packages out of sight. These items often encourage theft.



Use auto theft deterrents. Car alarms, steering wheel & column devices, kill switches



Always park in a well-lighted area and be familiar with your surroundings.



Call the police or notify security of any suspicious activity.

- **Don't let this happen to YOU!**
- **Crooks are waiting for the opportunity.**
- **Don't give them a chance, protect your car and personal property.**

Your Safety and the Protection of Your Property Start with YOU!

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Of Your Surroundings At All Times



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Keep

Houston Safe

**A PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM
SPONSORED BY:**

THE HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
& THIS COMMUNITY

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY 713-884-3131

CRIME CRACKDOWN



BILLY SMITH II : CHRONICLE

Staying informed

DEBORAH Ursprung, left, and Anna Kirk receive information Tuesday about the "Keep Houston Safe" program from Houston police officer Warren V. Jones outside a store along Interstate 10 East. HPD and other agencies are working to crack down on crime on the east side as part of a 12-week crime reduction initiative.



There are _____

NO Valubles
In this vehicle!



Keep Houston
SAFE
www.houstonpolice.org

CALL THE POLICE or notify the business security of any suspicious activity or persons.

AT HOME, if possible, put your vehicle in a garage and lock the door or at least park the vehicle in the driveway.

Keep all valuables and packages out of sight. These items often encourage a theft.

Use auto theft deterrents such as car alarms, kill switches steering wheel & column devices.

Always park in a well-lighted area and be familiar with your surroundings.

Call the police or notify security of any suspicious activity.

- Don't be a victim.
- Crooks wait for opportunities.
- Don't give them a chance, protect your car and personal property.

Houston Police Stations

Airport-Bush	281-230-6800
Airport-Hobby	713-845-6800
Central	713-247-4400
Clear Lake	281-218-3800
Eastside	713-928-4600
Fondren	713-773-7900
Kingwood	281-913-4500
North	281-405-5300
Northeast	713-635-0200
Northwest	713-744-0900
South Central	832-394-0200
Southeast	713-731-5000
Southwest	713-314-3900
Special Ops.	832-394-0000
Westside	281-584-4700

For all emergencies, call 9-1-1

For more information, visit www.houstonpolice.org

Houston Police Department
Public Affairs Division
Community Outreach Unit
1200 Travis, Suite 2100
Houston, TX 77002
713-308-3200

Crime Prevention
Tips To Help Reduce

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle



Keep Houston
SAFE

Harold L. Hurtt
Chief of Police

The Houston Police Department wants you to be safe. By practicing the suggested crime prevention tips you can help reduce the chances that you will become the victim of a burglary of a motor vehicle.

BE AWARE of your surroundings at all times. **PARK ONLY** in well-lighted areas near other vehicles. **PARK ONLY** in high traffic areas of a parking lot.



DO NOT jeopardize your safety or the safety of your family for convenience.



REMOVE all interior valuables from plain view. Lock these items in the trunk. **DO NOT** leave any articles of value in your car unattended, especially overnight. (e.g. cell phones, laptops, money, wallets, purses). **LOCK** all doors and roll up all windows.



IF YOU NOTICE anyone acting suspicious or hanging around the parking lot, return to the store or business and notify the management or call the police at 713-884-3131.





The HPD News

A Publication of the Houston Police Department

Volume 3, Issue 1

April 2008



"Keep Houston Safe" Campaign Lowered Targeted Crimes More Than 35%

HPD's recent 60-day crime fighting initiative and "Keep Houston Safe" public safety campaign along the East Freeway in northeast Houston helped lower targeted crimes in the area by more than 35 percent compared to the same period the previous year.

During the November and December 2007 campaign, more than 3,200 citizens signed pledges to "Keep Houston Safe" by learning and following simple crime prevention tips. They also spread the message with bumper stickers and hang tags proclaiming, "I Keep Houston Safe." The anti-crime team consisted of area citizens, business representatives, and the Northeast Division officers.

See **CAMPAIGN** on p. 3

HPD SWAT "B.E.A.R." Armored Vehicle

You might have seen the newest member of the Tactical Operations SWAT Team recently parked at 1200 Travis Street.

The "B.E.A.R." (Ballistic Engineered Armored Response) was originally developed to help provide law enforcement a new level of protection, mobility, and durability.

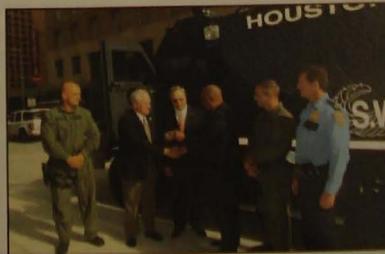
Up to 15 fully equipped officers can fit inside the vehicle. It is four-wheel drive and is equipped with a 300-Caterpillar engine and a winch.

The BEAR can be used in the following situations:

- Serving high-risk warrants
- Officer rescue
- Tactical emergency medical services
- Rapid deployment
- Gang intervention
- Group evacuation

The BEAR weighs about 12 tons and assures that occupants are safe while providing an effective defense in potentially lethal situations. It is an additional tool to support HPD's SWAT team.

This state-of-the-art vehicle would not have been possible without the funding and support of The 100 Club. The Houston Police Department is grateful to The 100 Club organization for all the support it gives to HPD and other area police agencies.



Police Week 2008 Awards

The department is planning something new for Police Week 2008. Twenty-one more award categories were added making a total of thirty (30) awards to be presented to classified and civilian employees. The new categories were created to recognize the diversified jobs being performed throughout the department. Unlike previous years, 2008 recipients will be announced at the ceremony. Three candidates from each category will be selected, with one being chosen the 2008 recipient.

The ceremony on Monday, May 12th at 10 a.m. will be held at Landry's Downtown Aquarium at 410 Bagby Street at Memorial, generously donated by the Houston Police Foundation. Stunning trophies and surprises are in store for those who are selected as this year's Police Week 2008 recipients. For more information, please contact Sergeant Michelle Chavez, Internal Investigations Command, at 713-308-1866.

Pictured left to right: SWAT officer Don Maulfair, The 100 Club, Inc. President Mr. Tom Pizzo and Executive Director Mr. Rick Hartley, Police Chief Harold L. Hurt, SWAT officer Troy Dupuy, and Captain David Gott, Tactical Operations.

National Integrated Ballistic Identification Network (NIBIN)

Darrell Stein, manager of the Firearms Section of the Houston Police Department Crime Laboratory, was recently selected as the chairman of the bylaws committee of the National Integrated Ballistic Identification Network (NIBIN). The bylaws committee is a part of the NIBIN executive committee, which makes recommendations to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and to members of the United States Congress on the NIBIN program.



"The use of firearms during the commission of a crime, and often in multiple crimes, has significantly increased in the United States. With the development of computerized imaging technology, it is possible to store fired cartridge case surface characteristics in a manner similar to the storage of automated fingerprint files," said Police Chief Harold L. Hurtt.

Chief Hurtt further stated, "I am proud that HPD's Crime Lab is well represented in that part of the law enforcement community that continues to study cutting edge technologies and report to the federal government on new methods, tools, and systems with which to fight crime."

NIBIN's national computerized database for firearm evidence allows for computerized comparisons of cartridge cases found at crime scenes and those fired in tests of guns seized from criminals. The Houston Police Department Crime Lab's Firearms Section receives approximately 3600 handguns per year for entry into NIBIN.

HPD's Integrated Ballistic Identification System has generated over 712 hits since its inception in 1999, making it the most successful program in the state of Texas, and the sixth most successful program in the United States. A "hit" occurs when an examiner, with the aid of the NIBIN system, links two or more cases to each other without having any knowledge that the cases are somehow associated. The 712 hits made by the HPD Firearms Section represent the association of over 1,400 criminal investigations.

Who We Are and Why It Matters: HPD Culture

Graduation from the Houston Police Academy rightfully brings out feelings of pride. Some of those feelings come from a sense of individual accomplishment – from having completed a challenge. But, some of those feelings of pride come from the uniform – *the HPD uniform* – and recognizing you have become part of a new brotherhood.

It is no secret that staffing is probably the department's most imposing challenge. But, it is not just about numbers. It is about getting the right people, and infusing them with the right attitude. Imagine 1000 new, "right" employees. What would that do for HPD? for the city of Houston? What can each of us do to get 1000 new "right" people for HPD?

It is important to realize that we hire new officers from a pool of people that have at first picked us. Before we can hire someone, he or she first must choose a career in law enforcement and then decide we are the organization in which to pursue that career. We select our employees and fellow workers only from those who have first chosen us. They make up our future. If top candidates are looking at two or more agencies with similar compensation, benefits, and opportunities, what sets HPD apart from the others? How do we achieve competitive advantage in the talent market?

People develop their attitudes about the profession and HPD one interaction at a time through direct experience and indirectly through family, friends, and coworkers. What messages do we send to outsiders about HPD? What about to our coworkers? Is it positive?

Every group has a culture that tells the world: "this is how we do things here." We have a culture—a culture that influences everything from individual employee behavior to public opinion. We build and maintain that culture in everything we do and say. A business thinker, Susanne Brio, coined the term: *culture* – "the exciting element which draws people to a company." You may not be able to put your finger on what exactly makes a culture, but you know if you are in line with your organization's. As a department, do we lure the people we want, or do we repel them? What effect do our actions and words have?

See *CULTURE* on p. 3

CULTURE FROM p. 2

We build our culture like we build our winning team, one proper action and one proper word at a time.

Outsiders form assessments of an organization's culture through gut-level cues – the “atmosphere” of the workplace, interactions with employees, accounts in the media, and decide whether the organization (or profession) is one they want to join . . . or stay with. So how does *our* culture affect the recruiting efforts?

Culture is ultimately about values and a strong sense of culture expresses clarity in the choice and ordering of an organization's values. A strong sense of culture brings coherence to the signals we send, allows pride to form and grow, and helps compatible people select us.

There are many reasons to be proud of the department. We impressed the nation in our dutiful response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita despite a staffing shortage. We are productive. Our homicide clearance rates are above the national average.

If we are to increase our staffing, we need to recruit highly-skilled persons who are compatible with our values. Letting our pride show through, being clear in what we stand for, communicating our values consistently in our interactions with each other and the public, and displaying confidence in who we are will attract applicants who are aligned with us, and ultimately accomplish our recruiting needs with much greater efficiency and effectiveness.

CAMPAIGN from p. 1

The department supported the “Keep Houston Safe” messages with increased patrol visibility, longer storefront hours of operation, and use of the Mobile Command Police Station (MCOPS) deployment at area businesses and neighborhoods. MCOPS allowed officers greater visibility to disseminate literature at local businesses and to improve police and community relations.

The target area has a high concentration of businesses, restaurants, and strip centers, and is comprised primarily of Beat 9C40 along the 11000 through 13000 blocks of the East Freeway service roads.

Police Chief Harold L. Hurtt stated, “We talk about how important it is to have citizens working with us to help reduce crime, and this team effort helped reduce burglaries of motor vehicles by 49 percent and auto thefts by 27 percent.”

Crime statistics for the targeted area during the campaign compared to the same prior year time period are as follows:

	<u>November/December 2007</u>	<u>November/December 2006</u>
Burglaries of motor vehicles	59	116
Auto thefts	40	55
Aggravated assaults	15	23
Robberies	22	23
Burglaries of buildings	17	26
Burglaries of habitations	38	52
Total crimes listed above	191	295

Chief Hurtt added, “I’m proud to commend the efforts of Captain Dale Brown and his staff, and area businesses and residents who pledged their support for the “Keep Houston Safe” campaign. According to Assistant Chief Dan Perales, Captain Brown dictated the role of his supervisors and the officers that work for him. This initiative shows what we are capable of when police and citizens work together.”

For more information, or to request more “Keep Houston Safe” signs, contact the HPD Public Affairs Division Community Outreach Unit at 713-308-3280.

Chevron Houston Marathon gets HPD Moving!

HPD is proud to have many runners from various ranks and divisions among the names on the Chevron Houston Marathon list. We applaud the efforts of those who participated and hope they inspire other HPD employees to "Get Moving!"

Their efforts parallel the *Get Moving Houston* fitness campaign and the launching of the Mayor's Wellness Council in 2005. The mission of the Wellness Council is to use resources in the Greater Houston area to encourage and motivate Houstonians of all ages and abilities to make wise choices regarding healthy eating and regular physical activity through education and participation in fun activities.

If you were inadvertently left off the following list, call 713-308-1606 and leave your name, division, and a number where you may be reached.

Chevron Houston Marathon Participants

- Captain Glen Yorek, Vice
- Lieutenant Richard Rekieta, Burglary and Theft
- Lieutenant Bruce Evans, Burglary and Theft
- Lieutenant Jesse Davila, Central
- Lieutenant David Simmons, Burglary and Theft
- Sergeant Ellen Bedingfield, Tactical Operations
- Sergeant Larry Buzo, Office of Inspector General
- Sergeant Edward Gonzalez, Southeast
- SPO Elizabeth Scardino-Ridling, Robbery
- SPO Olga Rodriguez, Internal Affairs
- SPO D. R. Daniel, Homicide
- SPO David Lopez, Office of the Chief of Police
- Officer Travis Warren, Special Operations
- Sergeant Justin Wood, Homicide
- SPO Chris Duncan, Homicide
- SPO Chris Urban, Special Operations
- Officer Greg Ford, Southeast

- Officer J. E. Reynado, Jr., Southwest
- SPO Ben Guajardo, Clear Lake
- Officer Elissa Leilan, South Central
- Officer James Swank, Westside
- Officer Damon Jensen, Westside
- Officer Paul Villanueva, Westside
- Officer Juan Montalvo, Westside
- Peter Nguyen, Fleet Management
- Phillip Wo, Fleet Management

ARAMCO Houston Half Marathon Participants

- SPO Marsha Johnson, Office of Inspector General
- Officer Glenn Juenke, Internal Affairs
- Officer Alvaro Vallejo, Jr., Fondren

WANTED Police Soccer Teams

For those of you who missed the marathon, here's another opportunity to stay in shape:

If you know of an active HPD soccer team or you play soccer and might be interested in developing a team, the Chicago Police Department's soccer team is currently looking for other police teams to play across the country. Feel free to contact CPD's Officer Bob Kellam, at his email address cpdsoccer@yahoo.com. The Web site address is www.cpsoccer.com or you can contact Officer Kellam with questions at (312) 485-0002.

Cops Who Never Quit

Police cold cases continue to be highlighted in movies and television shows, but they are much more than fiction. Many cases are agonizing to the detectives who work them, just as they are to the families involved. After all leads to locate a juvenile suspect from a 1997 shooting were exhausted, the investigation renewed in November 2007. HPD Homicide Officer H. A. (Tony) Chavez learned that a man's photograph on a recent Texas driver license application was a match for the alleged gunman's picture. The suspect was soon captured to relief of the victim's family. Chavez's determination and persistent efforts have brought pride to himself, his colleagues, and to the department. Be assured...there are cops who never quit.

For more information, visit the online story at www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/front/5504371.html.

Please email COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, or SUGGESTIONS to hpd.website@cityofhouston.net

Your Personal Safety Guide

Building
A Collaborative Partnership
between Citizens,
Businesses, and the Houston Police Department



Harold L. Hurtt
Chief of Police

Keep Houston
SAFE

www.houstonpolice.org

**REPORT SUSPICIOUS
ACTIVITY
713-884-3131**



Harold L. Hurtt
Chief of Police

“Keep Houston SAFE”

What is “Keep Houston SAFE”

“Keep Houston SAFE” is a citywide collaborative partnership between citizens, businesses, and the Houston Police Department. The main focus is crime prevention and the implementation of proactive crime prevention efforts and measures aimed at the elimination of criminal incidents, rather than responding to them after they have occurred. Simply, the goal of **“Keep Houston SAFE”** is to prevent crime.

Crime Prevention requires the active cooperation of all members of the community. The Houston Police Department is working hard to catch the “bad guys” and put them behind bars, but we are counting on you, the citizens, to work together in the fight against crime. In fact, the Houston Police Department believes this team effort is so important that it is mentioned in the department’s mission statement, which states in part, that *the department will strive to enhance the quality of life in the city of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime.*

HOUSTON is a dynamic city with hard-working citizens who want a safe city. We need everyone to become involved and be energized in their efforts to protect themselves, family, and hard-earned property.

How Can You Help “Keep Houston SAFE”

By pledging and practicing basic crime prevention, citizens will reduce the opportunities criminals look for when targeting a crime victim. Crime prevention starts with each person, family, and home. If we all do our part to fight crime and make it as hard as possible for a criminal to identify a crime victim, we are helping to **“Keep Houston SAFE”**

The positive result is the reduction of crime and a safer Houston. Take the time to review the crime prevention material provided by the Houston Police Department. Make the pledge to **“Keep Houston SAFE”** and become a part of the solution. Remember that Crime Prevention starts with you.

Crime Prevention is the anticipation, recognition, and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it.

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

*The Houston Police Department
wants you to be safe! By
practicing these personal safety
tips, you will reduce the
opportunities criminals look for
when targeting a crime victim.*

Street Sense

- Always stay alert to your surroundings and avoid locations/situations that make you more vulnerable to crime such as alleys or dark parking lots.
- Avoid distractions that decrease your awareness level, ie. talking on a cell phone or wearing headphones.
- Walk with a purpose to communicate a message of confidence. Make eye contact with people, however do not engage in conversation with strangers on the street.
- Travel with family and friends. Walking in a group decreases your chances of becoming a victim.
- Stay in well-lighted areas and avoid short-cuts through deserted areas.
- Avoid displaying large amounts of cash or other tempting items, such as expensive jewelry and clothing.
- Always trust your instincts. If a person or place makes you uneasy, leave.

Work Safety

- Never give telephone numbers, addresses or plans of fellow co-workers to anyone without their permission.
- Use discretion in revealing personal plans to people at work.
- DO NOT leave valuables in plain view. Always secure your property.
- DO NOT leave the reception area unattended.
- If you work alone or work outside of normal business hours, keep your office door locked.
- If you leave the office after hours, have a co-worker or security guard walk you to your car.

Personal Safety Tips continued...

Driving Safety

- Immediately lock your doors.
- DO NOT become involved with angry drivers and don't take traffic problems personally.
- Avoid eye contact with an aggressive driver and do not make obscene gestures.
- If someone is tailgating you, pull into the slow lane and allow them to pass.
- DO NOT tailgate other drivers or cut them off.
- If you have car problems, raise the hood and tie a white cloth to the door handle to signal for help. Get back into the car and keep the doors and windows locked. If someone stops, do not roll down your window. Ask them to call for help. Do not accept rides from anyone.
- If you think someone is following you, do not go home. Drive to the nearest police station, fire station, open gas station, or well-lighted place where there are people that can help you.
- Don't lose your life or the life of a passenger by becoming involved in ROAD RAGE.

Reduce Your Chance of Being Carjacked

- Always park in a well-lighted area so you can see your car and its surroundings from a distance.
- Have your car keys ready as you approach your vehicle and look under, around, and inside your car for persons who may be hiding. If safe, enter and immediately lock all doors.
- While stopped in traffic, leave enough room between your car and the one in front of you so you can maneuver and escape if necessary.
- Keep an alert eye out for any suspicious characters at intersections.

Remember!

Awareness is the key to your safety.

BURGLARY PREVENTION AT HOME

▶
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▶
▶

A burglary is reported every 15 seconds in the United States. The U.S. Department of Justice defines household burglary as "unlawful entry or attempted entry of a residence." This crime usually, but not always, involves theft. Of all the major criminal offenses, residential burglary is the most common. By following these simple steps, you can reduce the possibility that your home will be targeted.

HOME SAFETY

- Acknowledge all callers through locked doors. Before opening an exterior door to your home, know who is at the door and do not open the door to an unexpected visitor.
- Lock your doors and windows when you are at home. Criminals look for houses with the easiest entry.
- Never leave notes on your door that reveal that your home is not occupied.
- Trim Shrubs to deny intruders a hiding place to work; shrubs can block the view to the house. Walks and Driveways should also be kept free of objects or plants that might offer concealment for intruders who are trying to break into your house.
- Lawn Care is an effective indicator that someone is home. Keep your yard maintained.
- Permit easy visibility of your home by neighbors and/or police.
- Trim Tree Limbs from the bottom, up to 8 feet, to allow for clear visibility by neighbors and/or police.
- Install large reflective numbers (minimum 3 inches) on your house and mailbox so police and other emergency personnel can find your home quickly.
- Be alert in protecting not only your home, but your neighbors as well. Don't tell a stranger that your neighbor is not at home or volunteer any personal information about your neighbor.
- When traveling, have a neighbor collect the mail/newspaper or have the deliveries temporarily stopped.
- Before moving into a new house or apartment, ensure all exterior door locks on your new home are re-keyed or changed. Also change the code to the garage door opener.
- Alarms provide added protection and are most effective when used with other security techniques.
Remember:
 - Choose a reputable, well established alarm company.
 - Set the alarm system at night and when away from your residence.
 - Do not write your alarm code or password on or near the alarm keypad.
 - Put a warning sign on windows and entrances to notify possible intruders you have an alarm.

RESIDENTIAL SECURITY

DOES YOUR HOME HAVE THESE SAFEGUARDS?

Tip #1 Lighting
For outside lights, use photoelectric cell lights which automatically turn lights on and off at dusk and dawn.

TIP #2 Lighting
Make your house look "lived in" by keeping lights on automatic timers, especially when not at home.

Install and use a peephole with a 190-degree viewing area.

Install another lock in addition to the manufacturer's lock on ALL windows.

Homes with good EXTERIOR LIGHTING will provide additional protection from intruders. Outside lighting should be located high and out of reach. A good location is under the eaves. Inexpensive timers or photoelectric cells will automatically turn the lights on and off at dusk and dawn.

Secure cash and jewelry in bonded storage.

TIP #1 Exterior Doors
All exterior doors should be equipped with double cylinder deadbolt locks having a minimum one-inch throw when in the locked position.

TIP #2 Exterior Doors
The deadbolt locks should use a heavy-duty strike plate secured with three-inch steel screws.



Close all curtains or shades at night.

Check the shrubs and bushes around the doors and windows. They should not provide cover for an intruder attempting to force open a door or window. By trimming shrubs, you will limit the intruder's OPPORTUNITY! Place thorny plants along fences and near windows.

Use initials or just numbers on your mailbox.

Don't hide a key under the door mat...or anywhere else! Burglars know ALL the hiding spots.

Keep garage doors closed and locked even when at home.

Don't leave ladders or tools out. Burglars can use these items to break into your house. Lock them in a garage or tool shed.



ROBBERY PREVENTION

A robbery is one of the most serious and potentially dangerous crimes committed in the United States today. A robber commits a holdup because he or she believes that their profit will be worth the risk. By decreasing the possible profit and increasing the risk of apprehension, potential victims can reduce their chance of becoming a target.

Walk Alertly and Confidently

- Try not to walk alone. It's a lot safer if you walk with at least one other person.
- Be alert, walk with your head up and do not let your mind wander. Frequently scan your surroundings, that includes behind you.
- When walking at night, consider a taxi cab even for short trips.
- Trust your instincts, avoid uncomfortable situations. It's better to be safe than sorry.
- Be observant for groups of males/females driving or just hanging around.
- Do not take shortcuts through unlit, sparsely traveled paths such as trails, stairwells or alleys.

In Parking Lots

- Arrive and leave areas early to avoid being out after dark.
- **DO NOT** park next to a vehicle with dark tinted windows that can prevent you from seeing if someone is sitting inside it.
- Park in a high visibility areas and check for lighting in case you leave when it is dark.
- Ask a security officer to escort you to your vehicle if you feel uncomfortable.
- Walk briskly, confidently, and directly through the parking lot. Be cautious of people handing out fliers or asking questions.
- Have your car keys ready to unlock your car door, look around and under your car and observe other vehicles parked nearby for suspicious persons before approaching.
- Watch for people who may be following you. This can occur inside as well as outside businesses. If you suspect that you are being followed, report it immediately to security or police.
- Glance into the backseat and at the floorboards of your car before entering to check for anyone hiding inside.
- **DO NOT** sit in a parked vehicle. If a stranger approaches your vehicle, sound your horn and don't let off.
- **DO NOT** open your car door or window for anyone. If someone is standing near your unoccupied vehicle, do not approach it.

Robbery Prevention continued...

Be Smart About Cash

- Carry only the amount of cash that you expect to use. If cash is needed use ATM or debit cards.
- Avoid outdoor ATM's, particularly at night and those in secluded areas inside.
- Be alert at banks or check cashing businesses. Carrying cash marks you as a target. Avoid showing your wallet when possible. Keep needed cash, ID, and credit cards in an accessible pocket.

What To Do During a Robbery

DO NOT argue or fight with the robber. Any amount of money or valuables is not worth personal injury to you.

Follow the robber's directions, but do not volunteer more than asked for.

If you have to move or reach, tell the robber what you are going to do and why. Assure the robber that you will cooperate.

Make mental notes of:

- The robber's race, age, height, sex, clothing, complexion, hair, eye color, etc.
- Anything unusual about the robber such as scars or tattoos.
- The number of accomplices and how they left the scene, direction of travel, type and color of vehicle. Get the license number if you can safely do so.
- Any conversations the suspects may have with one another.
- What the suspect's weapon looked like so you can describe it later.
- Also, try to remember what the suspect touches so that fingerprints may be lifted.

Did You Know?

- Many of the robberies occur when you're alone and are committed by one or more male robbers.
- A lot of these robberies take place on the way to and from your car, especially in shopping centers and apartment parking lots.
- The use of a cellular phone or headset, whether driving or walking, is a distraction which can increase your likelihood of being robbed.
- Robbery is a crime of violence that threatens the safety and quality of life of a community.
- Robbery is a crime of opportunity that can be reduced through awareness and prevention.
- Robbers are serial criminals and will continue to prey on victims until arrested.
- Failure to report a robbery, not prosecuting the criminal if you are a victim, not providing information to police or Crime Stoppers about robbers ensures continued victimization.
- One of the most important robbery reduction strategies is to arrest the criminal.

BURGLARY OF A MOTOR VEHICLE

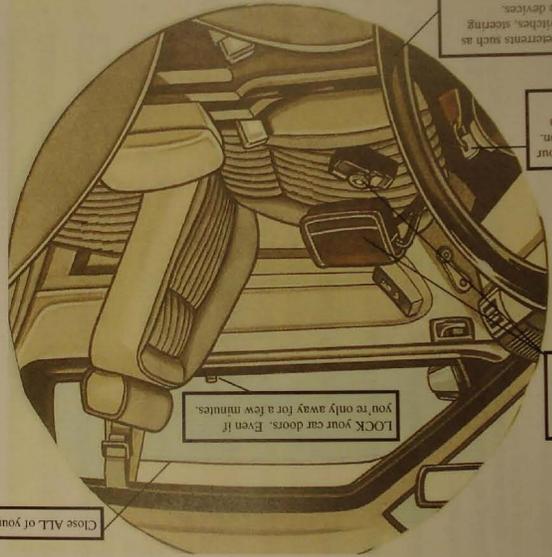
The Houston Police Department wants you to be safe. By practicing the suggested crime prevention tips you can help reduce the chances that you will become the victim of a burglary of a motor vehicle.

You can take an active role in reducing the crime in our city by securing any property in your vehicle where thieves cannot see it, taking your keys with you, and locking your car doors.

- **BE AWARE** of your surroundings at ALL times.
- **PARK ONLY** in well-lighted areas and in high traffic areas of a parking lot.
- **REMOVE** all interior valuables/packages from plain view (preferably prior to reaching your destination). Lock these items in the trunk. These items often encourage a theft.
- **DO NOT** leave any articles of value in your car unattended, especially overnight (cell phones, laptops, money, wallet, purse).
- **LOCK** all doors and roll up all windows. Whether you leave your vehicle for a minute or several hours, secure your belongings, lock your car and take your keys.
- **USE AUTO THEFT DETERRENDS** such as car alarms, kill switches, steering wheel and column devices.
- **PARK** your vehicle in your garage when at home.
- **PURCHASE** stereo or television equipment that can be removed and placed out of sight.
- **CARRY YOUR REGISTRATION** with you. Don't leave any personal identification documents, keys or credit cards anywhere in the vehicle.
- **IF YOU NOTICE** anyone acting suspicious or hanging around the parking lot, return to the business and notify the management or call the police at 713-884-3131.

Burglary of a motor vehicle is most often a crime of opportunity. If you take away the opportunity, you reduce the chance of being a victim. Most thieves won't gamble with breaking into a vehicle where they may walk away empty handed. Remember, they're looking for a sure thing. In the majority of these cases, property can be seen by looking into your vehicle.

BURGLARY OF MOTOR VEHICLE PREVENTION TIPS
DID YOU FOLLOW THESE TIPS BEFORE LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE UNATTENDED



PARK ONLY in well-lit areas of a parking lot.

Use Auto Theft Deterrents such as car alarms, kill switches, steering wheel and column devices.

DO NOT leave your keys in the ignition. Always take them with you.

DO NOT leave any valuables or packages in plain view or unsecured.

LOCK your car doors. Even if you're only away for a few minutes.

Close ALL of your windows.



IDENTITY THEFT

Identity Theft is a common term used for all types of crime in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses another persons personal data in some manner that involved fraud or deception, usually for economic gain. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America.

How Identity Theft is Committed

- **Shoulder Surfing** - Watching you punch in telephone calling card, credit card, ATM numbers.
- **Business Record Theft** - Stealing personal files from businesses or institutions where you are a customer, patient, employee etc.
- **Scamming** - Posing as a legitimate company or government agency to obtain your personal information. This often happens through e-mail.
- **Phone Fraud** - Establishing cellular phone service in someone else's name.
- **Skimming** - Stealing credit and debit card numbers as the card is being scanned/processed to pay for a purchase, using a special data collection device known as a "skimmer".
- **Dumpster Diving** - Going through your trash or the trash of businesses to obtain copies of checks, credit card/bank statements or other records.
- **Mail Theft** - Stealing mail to get new credit cards, bank or credit card statements, tax information as well as falsifying change of address information.
- **Steal Wallet or Purse** - Obtaining personal information from the theft of your purse or wallet.
- **The Information Highway** - Obtaining information that you share over the Internet.
- **Spoofing and Phishing** - When thieves set up look-alike websites of legitimate businesses and trick consumers into entering their personal information by sending e-mail messages that warn them that their account is about to expire or has been accessed illegally.

Warning Signs Of Identity Theft

- Your monthly credit card and bank statements suddenly stop arriving.
- You are denied credit for reasons that do not match your understanding of your financial position.
- You start getting bills from companies you do not recognize.
- You receive calls from collection agencies or creditors for an account you don't have or that is up to date.
- You observe unusual entries on your credit report.
- Financial account statements show withdrawals you didn't make.
- A creditor calls to say you've been approved or denied credit that you haven't applied for.
Or, you get credit card statements for accounts you don't have.

Identity Theft continued...

Preventing Identity Theft

- Guard your Social Security number. Remember this is the most important step. This is the key to your credit report and banking accounts. Give it out only when it is absolutely necessary.
- Minimize the amount of personal financial information and credit cards you carry. Memorize passwords and PINs instead of carrying them with you.
- Keep personal financial information in a secure place in your home. Shred identifying information before throwing it away.
- DO NOT give sensitive information to unsolicited callers. Remember that most legitimate businesses will not ask for your Social Security or bank account numbers.
- Shield your hand when entering your PIN at a bank ATM or when making long distance calls with a calling card. Take your credit card receipts and ATM slips. Shred them before throwing them away.
- Pick up new checks or a new or reissued credit card at your bank rather than having them delivered to your home. Do not have your driver's license number or social security number printed on your checks.
- Check your credit report each year for signs of unusual activity.
- Limit the exposure of your Social Security number and personal information by giving it only when it is absolutely necessary.
- DO NOT give personal information over the phone, over the Internet or through the mail unless you initiated the contact or are certain of the business' trustworthiness.
- Keep duplicate records of your wallet's contents.
- Mail payments from a safe location. Do not place them in your mailbox where they can be stolen.

If your bank or credit card statement does not arrive on time, call the issuer to make sure they are being sent to the proper address. Also contact the Post Office to see if a change of address has been filed in your name. A thief may steal or divert your statements to hide illegal activity.

If You Have Been The Victim Of Identity Theft

- **Contact the Houston Police Department immediately: 713-884-3131**
- **Contact the following credit reporting agencies:**
 - Trans Union 1-800-680-7289 www.tuc.com
 - CSC Fraud 1-800-272-9281 www.csccredit.com
 - Equifax 1-800-525-6285 www.equifax.com
 - Experian 1-888-397-3742 www.experian.com
- **Contact the Federal Trade Commission 1-877-IDTHEFT**
- **Review your Credit Report**

The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires each of the nationwide consumer reporting companies to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months.

ROBBERY PREVENTION FOR BUSINESSES

Stay Alert

- Know who is in your business and where they are.
- Be suspicious of people wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather.
- Be aware of suspicious activity outside of your business especially at opening and closing times.
- Write down license plate numbers of suspicious vehicles if visible from inside your business.

Physical Deterrents

- Keep your business well lit, especially at the entrances and exits.
- Maintain visibility throughout the business. Make sure signs and displays do not obstruct the view of the customer service area from the street.
- Mark the edge of the main doorway at varying heights to help identify the height of a robber.
- Keep cash at a minimum, and post notices in the doorway of this fact.
- Consider the installation of video cameras and/or alarm systems.

Bank Deposit Procedures

- Avoid wearing name tags or clothing advertising your business.
- When carrying large amounts of cash, use police/armed guard protection.
- Try to make deposits during daylight hours.
- At least two employees should make the deposit.
- Go directly to the bank. Do not make other stops along the way.
- Use various various routes and times.
- Inform your business when you arrive as well as when you leave the bank.
- Vary the vehicles and personnel used if possible.
- Be aware of any vehicle that may be following you.
- Never leave the deposit unattended in the vehicle.
- If you pick up cash from the bank, follow the same procedures while returning to your business.

Robbery Prevention for Businesses continued.....

Opening and Closing Procedures

- Have at least two employees present when opening and closing the business.
- Upon arrival at the business, look around the building for suspicious persons or vehicles as well as possible break-ins.
- At closing, have all areas inside business check to make sure no one is hiding inside.
- DO NOT open the door to anyone after business hours.

Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Employees are sometimes followed to their business or to their homes by robbers. Certain safety precautions should be followed regarding vehicles and home safety. Be observant of vehicles following you.

Know where police and fire stations are in your area. These are places of safety, should you suspect you are being followed. Write down the license plate of any suspicious vehicles. It is better to throw it away because you do not need it than to wish you had it later.

Planning for a Robbery

Although this is something that no person should ever have to experience, it is better to be prepared. The main objective should be to survive the robbery.

- Do not argue or fight with the robber. Any amount of money is not worth personal injury.
- Listen to your own instincts. If something seems wrong about a situation or a person, it probably is.
- Mentally review as often as possible the actions you should take if confronted with an emergency so that it becomes "second nature."
- Keep a spare key in any room in which an employee may be locked after a robbery and keep a hidden phone for such an emergency.
- Keep the telephone number of the police near the phone.
- Actively participate in all training sessions offered to become thoroughly familiar with company policies and procedures.

Have regular safety meetings to develop and discuss your "Plan." Some elements of a good plan include:

- Employee demeanor during a robbery (do not resist)
- How to notify police.
- An escape route
- How to obtain a suspect's description and/or vehicle information.
- Have prearranged signals between employees.
- How to activate an alarm.
- When not to activate an alarm.

Robbery Prevention for Businesses continued.....

What To Do During a Robbery

DO NOT argue or fight with the robber. Any amount of money or valuables is not worth personal injury to you.

Follow the robber's directions, but do not volunteer more than asked for.

If you have to move or reach, tell the robber what you are going to do and why. Assure the robber that you will cooperate.

Make mental notes of:

- The robber's race, age, height, sex, clothing, complexion, hair, eye color, etc.
- Anything unusual about the robber such as scars or tattoos.
- The number of accomplices and how they left the scene, direction of travel, type and color of vehicle. Get the license number if you can safely do so.
- Any conversations the suspects may have with one another.
- What the suspect's weapon looked like so you can describe it later.
- Also, try to remember what the suspect touches so that fingerprints may be lifted.

After the Robbery

- Call the police, 9-1-1, immediately.
- Lock all doors and ask all witnesses to remain until the officers arrive. If a witness must leave, obtain his/her name, address and telephone number to give to officers.
- All witnesses should write down a description of all the suspects. Do not discuss the robbery or compare notes about the robber's appearance.
- Protect the crime scene. Do not touch anything.

Houston Police Department Divisions

Central Division 61 Riesner Street	713-247-4400
Clear Lake Division 2855 Bay Area Boulevard	281-218-3800
Eastside Division 7525 Sherman	713-928-4600
Fondren Division 11168 Fondren	713-773-7900
Kingwood Division 3915 Rustic Wood Drive	281-913-4500
Mid West Division 3203 South Dairy Ashford	281-597-6000
North Division 9455 West Montgomery	281-405-5300
Northeast Division 8301 Ley Road	713-635-0200
Northwest Division 6000 Teague Road	713-744-0900
South Central Division 2202 St. Emanuel	832-394-0200
Southeast Division 8300 Mykawa	713-731-5000
Southwest Division 4503 Beechnut	713-314-3900
Westside Division 3203 South Dairy Ashford	281-584-4700