

# Los Altos Police Department



## Neighborhood Safety Meeting

# What crime is occurring in my neighborhood?

- [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com)

- Provides crime statistics
- Online crime alerting and mapping service
- Free service to the public
- Near real-time data
- Users can create a login and set alerts
- Receive automatic daily, weekly, or monthly email alerts if/when crimes occur

- [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com)

- Free private social network for neighbors to talk online
- 50% of Los Altos residents are on Nextdoor.com
- Neighbors can work together to build stronger, safer communities
- Gets the word out about what is going on in your specific neighborhood, from the people that live there

# What is Neighborhood Watch?

- Law enforcement officers cannot be everywhere at once, so they enlist the help of the community
- Crime Prevention Program
  - Enlists the active participation of neighborhoods in cooperation with police to reduce crime
- Neighbors getting to know each other, look out for one another, and work together around a common cause
  - Safety and security
- Learning and implementing crime prevention strategies
  - Recognizing and reporting suspicious activity/crimes and taking home security measures

# Los Altos Neighborhood Watch Program

- Consists of 115 Block Captains in the city
- Groups range in size from 3 residents to several hundred
- Some Block Captains are cross trained with both CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and BAT (Block Action Team)
- Most groups are utilizing NEXTDOOR.COM



# Why should I join a Neighborhood Watch group?

- Neighborhood Watch Block Captains get information directly from the police department when crimes occur
  - Crime bulletins go out directly to the Block Captains to distribute to their groups
  - Your group can have their own meetings to talk about the concerns you have, and the police department is always willing to come speak about crime and safety
- Getting to know your neighbors helps make safer neighborhoods!
  - Easier to spot suspicious activity and things that are out of place
  - Everyone looks out for one another
- Neighborhood watch groups can register and participate in National Night Out
  - Registered block parties will get visits from Police department personnel during their party
  - Opportunity for personal interaction with our department to ask the questions you have always wondered about, but never had the chance to ask
  - You get to have a fun party with your neighbors!
- The more groups we have, the safer the city can be



# Crime Prevention

- Modern crime prevention is done through awareness and opportunity reduction
- Elements of a Crime
  - Desire
  - Ability
  - **Opportunity**
- Take care of your residence by eliminating the opportunity for crime as much as possible
  - Secure all doors and windows in the home and in vehicles
  - Don't leave valuables unattended
  - Watch for suspicious activity around your home and neighborhood
- Crime Prevention improves the quality of life for every community

# Home Safety- Have a Home Security Inspection

- Meet with the Crime Prevention officer at your residence
- Look at potential vulnerabilities based on current crime trends
- Get advice about surveillance systems, alarms, and other preventative measures to use
- It is **FREE** to all residents! Contact the Crime Prevention officer to schedule an appointment

# Vehicle Security

- Crime of opportunity
- Usually a random crime
- Secure your vehicle
- Park in well lit areas
- Anti-theft devices are a deterrent
- **NEVER** leave anything of value inside of your vehicle or trunk



# Four “D’s”

- **Deter**- Know & look out for your neighbors, increase awareness & and natural surveillance, residential alarms, and dogs
- **Deny**- Keep doors and windows locked, secure garage & gates, and cut overgrown landscape near doors and windows
- **Delay**- Maintain appearance of occupancy, use timers for lights/TV/radio, don't close shades, blinds, or curtains completely all the time, pick up mail, newspapers, garbage cans, etc.
- **Detect**- Recognize and report suspicious activity or crimes in progress, do not enter a home if it appears to be burglarized. Go to a neighbors and call police

# What is suspicious activity?

- Slow moving vehicles, particularly without lights driving through a neighborhood several times
- Occupied or unoccupied unfamiliar vehicles parked for an extended period of time, especially at an unusual hour
- Someone dressed in dark clothing, running carrying a backpack or something of value, especially at an unusual hour
- Someone going door-to-door in a neighborhood- especially if one or more goes to the rear of a residence or loiters in front of an unoccupied house
- **BE ALERT!** Anything that seems slightly out of place, or is occurring at an usual time of day could be criminal activity

# I saw something suspicious, now what do I do?

- Report it immediately to the police department
  - Report incidents immediately and accurately
  - Do not confront anyone, attempt to apprehend a person committing a crime, or put yourself in danger to investigate suspicious activity
- Think about what you are reporting:
  - **What** happened
  - **When** it happened
  - **Where** it occurred (nearest address, cross street, or landmark in relationship to the event)
  - **Suspect Description**
  - **Vehicle Description**
  - **Any other important specific information.**
- Better to be safe than sorry!
  - The police would rather investigate when it is happening than be called when it is too late



# What numbers do I call?

- Non-Emergency number: (650)947-2770
  - Goes to records during business hours and will have to be transferred to dispatch to have officers respond
- 7-Digit Emergency number: (650)947-2779
  - Goes directly to Los Altos Dispatch 24-hours a day
  - Higher priority line than the non-emergency line
  - Used to report in-progress incidents that are not life threatening emergencies
- 911
  - Life threatening emergencies
  - In progress crimes or incidents



# What happens when you reach dispatch?


- You will be asked very specific questions in a certain order
  - What is the address of the emergency/incident?
  - Your name/phone number ? (you can remain anonymous, just let them know)
  - What are you reporting?
  - Listen carefully and answer the dispatcher's questions as accurately as possible
- You may be placed on hold, depending on what you are reporting and the number you are calling in on (even 911 lines)
  - We may only have one dispatcher working at the time and they are responsible for answering all the phones and talking to officers on the radio simultaneously
  - They have to prioritize calls and radio traffic based on what is going on and the level of the emergency
  - Please be patient with them, they want to get the most appropriate response to what you are reporting as quickly as possible
- Emergency or not, **Always Stay Calm**



# Suspicious Subject Description

- How long ago did you last see them?
- How many subjects were there?
- Description
  - Race/Sex/Age
  - Top to bottom- Hat, hair, facial hair, clothing, shoes
  - Outside to inside- Jacket color, shirt, etc.
  - Weapons?
- What specifically are they doing that makes them suspicious?
- Any vehicles associated with them?
- Where were they last seen? The direction of travel?

**GET A GOOD SUSPECT DESCRIPTION  
LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING FEATURES:**



The diagram shows a man from the waist up, wearing a dark hat, a striped shirt, and dark pants. He has a beard and mustache. Various features are labeled with lines pointing to them:

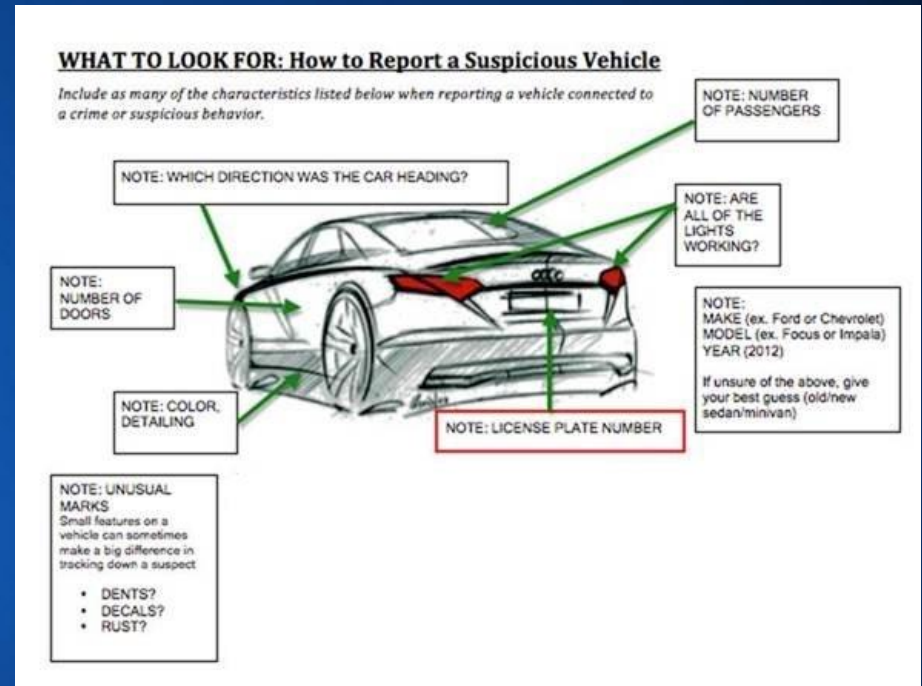
- TYPE OF WEAPON (pointing to a gun in his right hand)
- GENDER AND BUILD (pointing to his torso)
- RACE AND AGE (pointing to his face)
- VOICE/ACCENT (pointing to his mouth)
- HAIR AND EYES (TYPE AND COLOR) (pointing to his hair and eyes)
- FACIAL HAIR (BEARD OR MUSTACHE) (pointing to his beard and mustache)
- JEWELRY (pointing to a watch on his left wrist)
- FACIAL FEATURES (NARROW OR WIDE) (pointing to his face)
- HEIGHT AND WEIGHT (pointing to his head and shoulders)
- HAT OR CAP (pointing to his hat)
- GLASSES OR MASK (pointing to his face)
- CLOTHING (TYPE AND COLOR) (pointing to his shirt)
- IDENTIFIABLE MARKS (SCARS OR TATTOOS) (pointing to his left arm)
- OBJECTS CARRIED (pointing to a bag in his left hand)
- PHYSICAL INJURY OR DISABILITY (pointing to his right leg)
- SHOES (STYLE AND COLOR) (pointing to his shoes)

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU PROVIDE THE  
9-1-1 DISPATCHER OR THE POLICE OFFICER WITH A DETAILED  
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF A SUSPECT.**



# Suspicious Vehicle Description

- What makes the vehicle suspicious?
- Call when you see the vehicle. The sooner we get the information, the sooner an officer can respond and make contact to see what is going on
- Where is the vehicle/last direction of travel?
- License plates will give us the most information, followed by the make/model/color/distinct markings
- Is the vehicle occupied? If so, by how many? Descriptions (same as suspicious subject description)



Thank you for attending the  
Los Altos Police Department



Neighborhood Safety  
Meeting

Any questions or comments?