

EL SEGUNDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Holiday Shopping Season Is Here Don't Let Your Guard Down

Holiday shopping can cause people to rush and become careless and vulnerable to theft and other crimes. Stealing gifts and other property from cars can be an easy target for criminals and recently the city has seen a significant increase in thefts from motor vehicles. This year, we have experienced over 180 crimes involving the theft of property from vehicles city wide. In addition to the loss of property that is stolen, victims often find themselves repairing a costly window that was shattered during the vehicle break in.

The El Segundo Police Department has responded aggressively to this trend and so far this year, 55 individuals have been arrested for committing these types of crimes. Unfortunately, there is a seemingly endless line of thieves waiting to take their place, mainly because the victims are making it so easy.

Virtually all of these thefts involved either items which were visible from outside of the vehicle, including packages, laptop computers, briefcases, GPS units; or objects such as cellular telephone and/or iPod charging cords which led thieves to believe that valuable property may be inside the vehicle. Most of these thefts COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED if the victim had simply taken the few extra seconds to place the items entirely out of view or, better yet, removed them from the vehicle completely.

To help make your holiday season a safe and happy one, and to lower the risk of becoming a victim, the police department suggests that you follow a few easy precautions when you shop. First, park your car as close to your destination as possible and park in a well-lighted area. When you do your shopping, remember to store your packages, electronic devices, and any other property out of sight or in the trunk. Also, if you take packages to your car but plan to return to the store or mall, place your purchased items in the trunk and drive your car to a new location within the parking lot as criminals often watch for unsuspecting shoppers who simply place their packages into their car and then return to the stores. Finally, when you are finished shopping and arrive home, remove all the packages and property from your vehicle so would be thieves have nothing visible to entice them to make you their next victim.

Don't let your guard down and be lulled into the false sense of security of "it won't happen to me" like more than 180 other victims already have this year.

To learn more about safeguarding your property and vehicle, please visit the "Move it or Lose it" link on the El Segundo Police Department website at http://www.elsegundo.org/depts/police/default.asp, or contact Lt. Brian Evanski at 310.524.2260, or Crime Prevention Specialist Laurie Risk at 310.524.2274.

The El Segundo Police Department wishes everyone a safe and joyous holiday season. Together we can make a difference in our community.