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Chief James A. Cervera

Crime Prevention Chronicle - Your Quarterly Source for Crime Prevention Information!



VB City of Virginia Beach Police Department Crime Prevention Unit

Better Business Bureau: Top 10 Most Pervasive Scams in our Region

Sweepstakes Scam:

You have won a contest! Or the lottery! Or the Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes! All you have to do to claim your prize is to pay some fees or taxes in advance so they can release your prize. This is not a new scam, but it is a perennial problem.

Click Bait Scam:

This one takes many forms, but the most notorious of the past year was when the Malaysian Airline plane went missing ("click here for video"). Other click bait schemes use celebrity images, fake news, and other enticing stories in order to get you to unintentionally download malware.

Robo Call Scam:

The notorious "Rachel from Cardholder Services" made a comeback in 2014. This scam claims to be able to lower your credit card interest rates and takes personal information - including your credit card number - and then charges fees to your card.

Government Grant Scam:

You get a call saying you have been awarded a government grant for thousands of dollars. It may even mention a program you've heard about in the news. All you have to do to collect your grant is pay a couple hundred in fees by wire transfer or prepaid debit card.

Medical Alert Scam:

Another one that preys on older folks. You get a call or a visit from a company claiming a concerned family member ordered you a medical alert device in case you have an emergency. They take your credit card or bank information but you never receive anything.

Emergency Scam:

This one is sometimes called the "grandparent scam" because it often preys on older consumers. You get a call or email from your grandchild or other relative who was injured, robbed or arrested while traveling overseas and needs money ASAP.

Copycat Website Scam:

You get an email, text message or social media post about a terrific sale or exciting new product. You click through and it looks just like a popular retailer's site. But when you order, you either get a cheap counterfeit or nothing at all - and now they have your credit card number!

"Are You Calling Yourself?" Scam:

Scammers can make a call look like it's coming from anywhere. The latest trick puts your phone number in the Caller ID, which piques your curiosity and gets you to pick up the phone or return the call. Then they have snagged you in whatever scam they are running.

Tech Support Scam:

You get a call or pop-up on your computer claiming to be from Microsoft (or Norton, Apple, etc.) about a problem on your computer. They say if you give "tech support" access to your hard drive, they can fix it. Instead, they install malware on your computer and start stealing your personal information.

Arrest Scam:

You receive an ominous phone call from someone claiming to be a police officer or government agent (often the IRS in the U.S. or the CRA in Canada). They are coming to arrest you for overdue taxes or for skipping out on jury duty. But you can avoid it by sending them money via a prepaid debit card or a wire transfer. Another variation on this is that you'll be arrested for an overdue payday loan. Whatever the "violation," it's scary to be threatened with arrest, and many people pay out of fear.

Nice Weather is Finally Here!

While a journey to a public park is always fun, it is also important to be ready in advance for security reasons. When it comes to safety while in the park, some may simply think of parks as being places for kids to play, but they can be great for grown-ups as well. Adults utilize them for walking, jogging and sightseeing.

Nothing has the potential to wreck a good time faster than an unwanted encounter.



On a daily basis, people will visit a local park before or after their work day. Predators know this can prove to be a good time for them to get a person when they are alone, and not paying sufficient attention to their surroundings. Law breakers watch for simple targets, people separated from others, those who are easy to surprise; making it essential to be mindful of your surroundings at all times. Attempt to avoid dark locations and areas with barriers where someone can hide behind. Criminals want the benefit of remote locations where they can surprise a citizen. Take in everything around you and try not to look lost, confused or shy; examples of characteristics aggressors like. If they see someone is proactively aware of their surroundings or could potentially be the type to cause trouble, the possibility is they will leave you alone.

Virginia Beach has dozens of beautiful parks throughout the City. Enjoy them as the weather continues to warm up, but please *keep safety in mind*, especially for your children or grandchildren. Small children are very unpredictable. Their logic is very different from ours. They tend to forget the importance of staying close to you and they get distracted very easily.

How many times have you taken kids to a playground and suddenly you do not see them anymore? You start looking for them and your heart starts pounding. Luckily you finally see them playing away, not a care in the world, unaware of the panic attack you just had. It can happen in seconds, but seems like an eternity until you finally see your precious children again. Remind them of the importance to stay close to you and always inform you where they are going. This may sound very simple but the best way not to lose your children is to have them close to you at all times. Teach them the importance of keeping a safe distance with you. If they cannot see you, they are no longer at a safe distance.



Finally, choose a meeting place that you know they can remember in case they do get lost. If the children are too small, it might be a better idea to tell them to stay in the place where they realized they were lost. Most of the time you are not too far away from them. But if they start looking for you, it makes it a lot more difficult to find them.

In the United States, a vehicle is stolen every 21 seconds ...

Stolen cars, vans, trucks, and motorcycles cost victims time and money, and increase insurance premiums. They are also used to commit other crimes.

- ◆ Never leave your car running or keys in the ignition when you're away from it, even for "just a minute."
- ◆ Always roll up the windows and lock the car, even if it's in front of your home.
- ◆ Never leave valuables in plain view, even if the car is locked. Put them in the trunk or at least out of sight.
- ◆ Remove portable electronic devices such as smart phones and GPS navigation systems, including suction cup or bean bag type mounts. Even the visible appearance of a suction cup ring on the glass windshield can be an enticement to a thief to break in and look for the GPS system.
- ◆ Park in busy, well-lighted area.
- ◆ Carry the registration and insurance card with you. Don't leave personal identification documents or credit cards in your vehicle.
- ◆ When you pay to park in a lot or garage, leave just the ignition or valet key with the attendant. Make sure no personal information is attached. Do the same when you take your car for repairs.



Add Extra Protection:

- ◆ Install a mechanical locking device (commonly called clubs, collars, or J-bars) that lock to the steering wheel, column, or brake to prevent the wheel from being turned more than a few degrees. Use it!
- ◆ Invest in a security systems if you live in a high-theft area or drive an automobile that is an attractive target for thieves. You may even get a discount on your auto insurance.

DON'T be a Victim of this Serious Crime!

TIPS: How to Avoid Car Break-ins:

1. Do not leave valuables in plain view: GPS devices, lap tops, PDA's, cell phones, MP3's, wallets, purses, key fobs.
2. Do not leave windows or sunroof open.
3. Do not leave doors unlocked.
4. Do not leave keys in the vehicle.
5. Do not leave the garage door opener in plain view.
6. Do not leave out items with personal information.
7. Do not move valuable items to the trunk while in public view.
8. Slow down and use common sense before you leave your car.



final thoughts...

Larcenies from motor vehicles are still too prevalent throughout our city. Please remind friends, family and neighbors to lock their vehicles and never leave anything of value in their cars. Remember, if a criminal finds that stealing from cars is easy in your neighborhood, they may feel comfortable moving on to something more (burglaries or robberies). Complacent neighbors who leave their car unlocked may unknowingly make you a target for future crimes.



Upcoming Events >>>

TRIAD/S.A.L.T. Meetings

Held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10am, Marian Manor (5345 Marian Ln)

Contact: Deputy Gary Zalas at 385-6757

CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY (CPA)

Two sessions of the CPA are held per year, one in spring and one in fall.

Click here to register: <http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/police/opsdiv/Pages/Virginia-Beach-Citizens-Police-Academy.aspx>

SENIOR CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY (SCPA)

Two sessions of the SCPA are also held per year, one in spring one in fall.

Click here to register: <http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/police/opsdiv/Pages/SeniorCitizenAcademy.aspx>

CAC Meetings

All meetings are held at 7pm

1st Precinct: 1st Tuesdays
Municipal Center, Building #19
2424 Courthouse Drive

2nd Precinct: 2nd Wednesdays
Second Precinct
820 Virginia Beach Blvd

3rd Precinct: 3rd Thursdays
Williams Farm Recreation Center
5252 Learning Circle

4th Precinct: 4th Thursdays
Glenwood Community Center
2097 Roundhill Road

TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME



Virginia Beach Business Watch ...

Together We Can Reduce Crime

My friends and I at the Virginia Beach Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit are excited to help you learn how you can reduce the opportunity for crime to strike you or your business. Watch for our advice and events to learn more each month. This month I would like to invite you to call now and sign up for Business Watch. We will make you an appointment to do a free security assessment of your business and even teach your staff how to "Take A Bite Out Of Crime".



Business Watch

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[facebook.com/virginiabeachPD](https://www.facebook.com/virginiabeachPD)



twitter.com/VBPD



[youtube.com/VBPDPIO](https://www.youtube.com/VBPDPIO)

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