



BURBANK POLICE DEPARTMENT

200 North Third Street, Burbank, CA 91502

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

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CHIEF OF POLICE

DISTRACTION THEFTS

June 15, 2023

The Burbank Police Department has seen an uptick in distraction thefts primarily affecting the older adult community, which typically involves the theft of jewelry and wallets. Thieves are stealing from unsuspecting victims under the guise of a friendly and unassuming encounter in public.

In many cases, victims have been approached by suspects who ask for directions or initiate a casual conversation. Suspects often engage in some form of physical contact with their victims, like hugging them, brushing up against them, or standing extremely close. During the encounter, perpetrators have been able to remove valuable jewelry worn by victims and replace it with fake or costume jewelry. Thieves have also distracted the victims in various ways and stolen wallets and or cell phones from purses. Quite often, victims do not immediately realize they've been deceived.

This sleight-of-hand deception scheme is often performed by a group of suspects who work together to distract victims in public. Seniors have been especially susceptible to this crime trend as the distraction tactic can easily disrupt one's attentiveness to what is occurring.

To help safeguard yourself from this type of theft, the Burbank Police Department recommends the following:

- Always be aware of your surroundings
- If you have a purse or bag that zips, snaps, or buckles make sure to keep it closed
- Conceal money, money envelopes, and or money bags
- DO NOT leave your purse or bag in a shopping cart or unattended
- Always keep your purse or bag to the front of your body and within your sight
- Never engage in any physical contact with a stranger
- If you happen to fall victim to this type of crime, notify the police immediately and obtain as much information as you can about the suspect(s) and any vehicle that may be involved

The Burbank Police Department reminds you to always report suspicious activity on our nonemergency, 24-hour number, at 818-238-3000. For emergencies, dial 9-1-1.

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QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS STATEMENT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:
SERGEANT BRENT FEKETY | 818-238-3240 | BFEKETY@BURBANKCA.GOV

24-HOUR: 818-238-3000

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE: 818-238-3240

DETECTIVE BUREAU: 818-238-3210

@BURBANKPD

www.BURBANKPD.org

FACEBOOK.COM/BURBANKPD



@burbankpolice

CRIME STOPPERS: 800-222-TIPS (8477) | LACRIMESTOPPERS.ORG

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