

1. Crimes and Home Security

Encinitas Ranch has recently seen a modest increase in criminal activity. The board of directors is very much aware of this and they are offering their support. One of the more notable action taken to date is increasing patrolling throughout the community by WARM, the security firm hired by the homeowners association.

Law enforcement and the HOA cannot overcome crime without the support of homeowners individually and as a community. The board continues to work closely with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and their crime prevention unit. The Crime Prevention Unit participated in a crime prevention seminar open to the community and hosted by the board president, Dick Stern, two years ago. They have also made a number of visits to homes within our community to review home security measures and to participate in Neighborhood Watch organizational meetings. They have access to detailed crime reports and have completed two detailed analyses of crime committed within Encinitas Ranch over the past several years. Homeowners can access crime reports themselves through www.crimemapping.com

Analysis of crimes in our community reveal that the vast majority of them are "crimes of opportunity" and preventable.

The following are some tips and hints to optimize the security of your own homes and property:

- Always lock your doors and windows even when leaving for "just a few minutes."
- Never leave a house key available: under a doormat, in a flower pot, or on the ledge of the door. These are the first places a burglar will look.
- Lock your cars that are left in the driveway and ensure that all valuables in the car are out of sight.
- Exterior doors should have dead bolt locks with a one-inch strong metal bar extending into the door frame. Sliding doors and windows should all have ventilation locks as well as auxiliary locks to bolster security.
- Ensure to use good locks for garage, patio or other doors that lead out through a storage area or a spare room.
- When you leave for vacation use timers so that lights, radio and/or TV go on and off throughout the house to indicate someone is home.
- For longer trips, be sure and stop mail and newspaper delivery or have a neighbor collect them daily. In short, make your house look "lived in."
- Install a wide angle lens viewer in the front door. Never open the door without knowing who is there.
- Most of the homes in the community have sophisticated alarm systems yet few people actually activate them. Use these alarm systems at night and when you leave the home. It only takes a few seconds of time to turn the systems on. Post a sign in your front yard indicating that your home has an alarm system. Even if you don't have an alarm system consider buying a sign that indicates you have one.

Any homeowner can request a personal security analysis of their home by the Sheriff's Department Crime Prevention Unit. For arrange for a visit, please call 760-966-3587 or 760-966-3588.

The HOA would welcome the opportunity to host another crime prevention seminar. Also, let us know if you and your neighbors are interested in establishing a formal Neighborhood Watch. Please contact Chris Jaeschke if you are interested in either.