



BURBANK POLICE DEPARTMENT

200 North Third Street, Burbank, CA 91502

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

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CHIEF OF POLICE

DISTRACTION THEFTS

January 31, 2024

The Burbank Police Department is currently investigating numerous cases of distraction style thefts in recent months targeting retail shoppers. Thieves are stealing from unsuspecting victims under the guise of friendly and unassuming encounters in public.

In recent cases, suspects will work together and approach a victim and distract them by engaging in casual conversation or asking innocuous questions to get their attention. This will cause the victim to turn their attention away from their purse or wallet while the second suspect takes the item. These encounters are occurring at grocery stores, warehouse stores, home décor/clothing retailers, and drugstores.

While some incidents are occurring inside the store, some suspects are known to contact victims in the parking lot. While one suspect distracts the victim, another will open a passenger door and retrieve the victim's belongings from inside the car.

Unfortunately, not every business maintains surveillance cameras. When footage exists, it may not always present high-quality video that will allow for suspect identification or the capability to read a license plate. Therefore, it is critical for the community to remain vigilant while going about their day.

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 non-emergency, 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 STEPHEN TURNER | 818-238-3240 | STURNER@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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