



SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Northwestern Division

12592 El Camino Real, San Diego, CA 92130, (858)523-7000

Residential Burglary Series

A series of high-end residential burglaries have occurred in the Del Mar, Carmel Valley, Torrey Highlands, Del Mar Mesa, Black Mountain Ranch and North City areas. Burglaries have also occurred in the San Diego County Sheriff Department jurisdiction of 4S Ranch, Rancho Santa Fe and north Poway communities. These burglaries share many similarities that are unique to a specific group of organized burglary suspects.

As a result of our investigations, the San Diego Police Department has identified consistencies, behaviors and common characteristics. We want to share what we have learned with the hope of helping to prevent future victims.

Common practices of Suspects:

- These suspects are highly organized, skilled and appear to have collective training. They operate in groups, often teams of four, with three suspects doing the burglary and the fourth as a “getaway driver.”
- The burglaries generally take place within the first few hours after nightfall.
- All suspects wear long pants, typically long sleeve hooded sweatshirts, masks and gloves.
- They target homes that abut a greenbelt, golf course or hiking trail and have been seen walking along the back of homes looking for one that appears to be unoccupied (no interior lights or residents seen).
- Once in the backyard of a targeted home, the suspects further attempt to verify no one is home. Numerous videos have captured the suspects leaving a yard if they observe someone home.
- Knowing most home alarms are only active on the first floor, the suspects prefer to make entry via a second-floor balcony. They utilize patio furniture, ladders and even scale walls to gain access to the second story. Single story homes have also been targeted.
- They often break a glass door to gain entry since many homes are not equipped with glass break sensors on doors. If you have an existing alarm, we encourage you to consider adding glass break sensors for further “target hardening.”
- They target bedrooms and closet areas, looking for high-end jewelry, handbags, cash and watches. They have also targeted safes and office areas looking for small valuables and cash.

- Home cameras do not always deter the suspects and they will often turn the cameras away to avoid being recorded.
- These burglaries occur quickly. The suspects typically flee the same way they made entry.

Actions you can take to reduce your chance of becoming a victim:

- If you have an alarm system, set it every time you leave your home.
- Consider updating your alarm system and adding second floor motion sensors and glass break sensors to areas with large windows or glass doors.
- Install an audible alarm loud enough to not only cause discomfort to someone inside the home, but also easily heard outside by neighbors. Consider adding a second siren near a soffit vent in your attic area. Suspects have run from homes immediately when alarm systems are activated.
- If you use camera systems capable of sending “motion” notifications to your smartphone, ensure they are set up. In many cases, the victim called police/sheriff directly to notify of the burglary in-progress.
- If you live against a greenbelt, consider adding a motion sensor to your back wall/property line.
- When you leave your home, consider making it appear occupied. Leave an interior light or television on. Consider using “smart lights” to make it appear someone is home.
- If away on vacation, let your neighbors know. Contact your local police station to schedule vacation checks, a service provided by our Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP’s). Also, store valuables in a large bolted down safe or bank security box while away for periods of time.
- If you see something that does not look right, call law enforcement and report it immediately. If you see any suspicious groups walking greenbelts, trails or golf courses who match the above suspect description, please call 911 immediately!
- You can visit: <https://www.sandiego.gov/police/services/prevention/tips> for more information on preventing crimes against you and your property and many other topics.
- If you have any questions, please contact the Northwestern Division Community relations Officer at jbriggs@pd.sandiego.gov.