



BUSINESS ALERT NEWSLETTER

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HELPING TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

November

BUSINESS ALERT NEWSLETTER

*Is a publication of the
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HOLIDAY SAFETY

TIPS FOR SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS

During the holidays homes are jam-packed with glittering gifts. Stores, malls and downtown streets are teeming with unsuspecting shoppers. Some people are rushing around, stressed out and careless, looking for last-minute gifts, trying to get everything done. It's enough to make a crook giddy with holiday joy.

Here are some tips on how to safely celebrate this holiday season.

IF YOU'RE TRAVELING

- Get an automatic timer for your lights.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home and ask that they park their vehicle in the driveway from time to time.
- Stop newspaper and mail delivery.

IF YOU'RE OUT FOR THE EVENING

- Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it looks and sounds like someone's home.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows. Even when you leave just for a few minutes.
- Don't display gifts where they can be seen from outside.

IF YOU'RE SHOPPING

- Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.
- Park in a well-lighted space, and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk before you arrive at the next shopping spot.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.
- Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Don't overburden yourself with packages. Be extra careful with purse and wallets. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.

Shopping with kids? Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

A COMMUNITY-WIDE EMERGENCY IS ANY EVENT THAT PRESENTS AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO YOU, YOUR NEIGHBORS, AND YOUR SURROUNDINGS. THIS COULD INVOLVE A NATURAL OR INDUSTRIAL HAZARD, OR A NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERN. THE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL INDUSTRY AND FEDERAL AGENCIES, ARE PREPARED TO ASSIST YOU SHOULD A COMMUNITY-WIDE EMERGENCY OCCUR.

HOW YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED IN AN EMERGENCY

If you are in an affected area, you will be notified by radio, fire or police services. You may be instructed to Shelter – Shut – Listen, or to evacuate your area. Be prepared to be without police, fire or medical services for the first seventy-two hours of a major disaster. You should **plan** to have the necessities of life such as **water, food** and **shelter** during the first **72 hours**.

IF EVACUATION IS NECESSARY

Listen carefully to KCBS Radio (740 – AM) or your local television station to be certain you are in an evacuation area.

IMPORTANT STEPS FOR EVACUATION

- Leave your area within the instructed time.
- Keep telephone lines free for emergency use only.
- Turn off all stoves and space heaters.
- If you must evacuate take your pets with you.
- Take vital documents and emergency supplies (including prescription medications) with you.
- Safely drive the route provided to you by public safety officials.
- Keep automobile windows and vents closed until you reach your destination.
- If you need transportation assistance contact a neighbor or call 911.

Take advantage of the helpful emergency information available at the following websites:

www.ready.gov
www.prepare.org
www.oes.ca.gov
www.co.contracosta.ca.us

BUSINESS ALERT PROGRAM

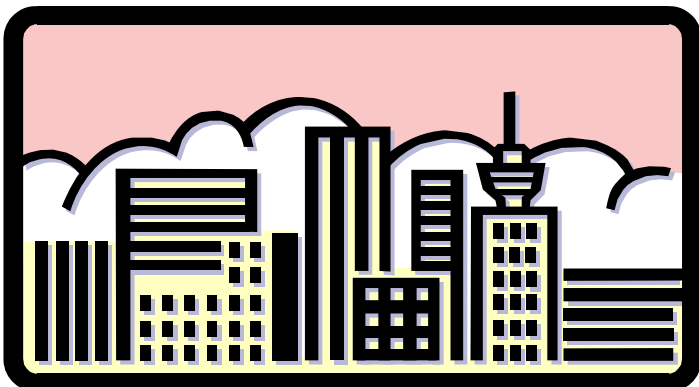
Business Alert is a program designed for businesses in the City of Pinole. It has long been known to police agencies that criminals will repeatedly victimize the same type of business over and over again. The criminal's target may be your company checks, computer equipment, or to enter your business to commit fraud or shoplifting.

Members of the Pinole Police Department Crime Prevention Unit work closely with the business community in addressing crime trends and planning methods to prevent crime.

The unit members can provide speakers on a variety of topics including:

- Check/credit Card Fraud
- Office or Business Security
- Personal Safety
- Security Surveys
- Shoplifting Prevention
- Auto Burglary Prevention
- Vehicle Theft Prevention

To schedule a speaker contact Al Chavarria at (510) 724-8961.



HOW TO SURVIVE SCAMS, SCHEMES AND TECHNO – FRAUDS!

FALSE INVOICES:

No doubt, your company has invoices arriving weekly. While most are on the up-and-up, pay close attention to phony invoices sent directly to your accounting department. These bills may be for nonexistent services such as advertising, directory listings, office supplies, or printer toner. Establish clear cut rules for handling invoices and post a list of your regular suppliers. Include the business name, address, and phone number. Read the fine print!

SHIFTY SERVICE REP/SERVICE CONTRACT SCAM:

When it's time to have your office machines maintained or repaired, beware, "*Office Intruders*" prey on this fact to gain entry into your office by disguising themselves as repair or service representatives. Once in your office, your machine may be switched for an inferior model, or may even be stolen! Get to know your repair person and your office machine maintenance schedule. Review service contracts and invoices to ensure that service has not been changed without your authorization.

VOICE MAIL SYSTEM:

You can check your voice mail while away from the office by using the remote access feature. This easy access also opens the door for "techno-trespassers" to place unauthorized calls from you voice mail system. To protect your business, delete the out-dial and through-dial capabilities on your voice mail system. Remove all mailboxes not in use.

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNICIAN SCAM:

The caller claims to be a telephone service technician who needs your help: "Just push '9' then '0' followed by the pound sign '#' and then hang up." This action will give access to an outside line that will be used to make long distance calls from you PBX. Take note, no telephone service technician would ever ask for this kind of assistance.