



## Monthly Newsletter

August 2022

### *Garage door opener burglary*

On Thursday night, a burglar broke into a car parked in the driveway of a home on Los Rios Drive, rifled through it, then took the garage door opener, opened the garage and burglarized it. He went through drawers and cupboards, then stole two backpacks and rode away on a bicycle that was stored in the garage.

The activity woke the homeowner. "I looked out of our bedroom window and saw a man riding off on my bike with a backpack on and a backwards hat. We believe he still has our garage door opener, so we have deactivated the remote opening function," the homeowner reported.

According to law enforcement experts, this unfortunate episode is a reminder that you should NEVER leave a garage door opener or anything of value in a car that is parked outside your garage. Car burglaries are all too common, but they can quickly escalate into a major loss if the burglar can get into your garage.

In addition, our deputies emphasize that you should always lock the door leading from the house into the garage as a secondary precaution.

### *Electric scooters are targets for thieves*

As we reported on July 15, a 17-year-old Rio Americano High School student was pistol whipped and robbed of his electric standup scooter on Jacob Lane around 5:30 in the morning while he was on his way to football practice.

Because the boy's father later found the scooter in a gutter, broken into pieces, it appeared that the robbers may have been after the scooter's lithium ion battery pack, which is the most valuable part of a scooter. However, according to experts, although E-scooter thefts are widespread, E-scooter battery theft is not, with the exception of commercial ride-share scooters in some major cities.

#### **Battery theft not an issue**

"This sort of battery theft is not common," said Chase Stubblefield, general manager of [Electric Scooter Guide](#). "We have extensive industry experience spanning back to 2018.

The main time that scooters have been ripped apart for parts has been with the shared scooters. Robbers would steal parts and resell them,” he explained.

Mike Majors, owner of [The Electric Bike Shop](#) on Broadway in Sacramento agrees. “Scooter batteries are really hard to take out,” he explained. “We do a lot of scooter repairs and none of our customers has ever reported that the battery had been stolen.”

### E-scooters are a target

Majors said many students have begun using E-scooters to commute to school and some adults choose them as a money-saving option for their commutes to work. Because adult-sized E-scooters sell for upwards of \$500 to \$1,000, they can be an attractive target for thieves, so it is important to secure them while they are parked

Experts offer the following advice:

- Store your scooter indoors.
- Avoid parking it on the street overnight.
- Use an alarm system.
- Use a u-lock.
- Use a GPS tracker.

According to Paul Somerville of Electric-Scooter Guide, “We recommend only using very high-quality u-locks, such as the Kryptonite New York series. These locks are expensive and heavy ... but worth it. Slip the U-lock through a permanent point that cannot be easily removed with tools, such as the frame, a permanent carrying handle or through the folding mechanism.”

*(CLICK ON IMAGE to view KCRA's coverage of the Jacob Lane robbery.)*



## How to manage new water restrictions

The [Sacramento Suburban Water District](#) (SSWD) has declared a Stage 1 water alert in response to California's severe drought and has called for homeowners to cut their water usage by 20%.

Among other things, the district has ordered its customers to limit landscape watering to three days a week, to prevent irrigation water from spraying into the street or flooding gutters and to only irrigate in the cool morning hours to reduce evaporation. In fact, outdoor watering from noon to 8 p.m. is prohibited.

However, many homeowners are unsure how to cut water use by a specific amount or are concerned that doing so may lead to dead trees and reduced property value.



According to SSWD Water Conservation Supervisor Greg Bundesen, since 65% of the water used by homes in the Sacramento area is for irrigation, the simplest way to cut consumption is to determine how many minutes your irrigation system is running on each zone, then cut each zone's minutes by at least 20%.

Run time is not the only consideration, however. Bundesen noted that homeowners are also required to fix improperly aligned sprinkler heads and system leaks. He acknowledged that many homeowners don't have a detailed knowledge of how their irrigation system is performing or how to adjust sprinkler heads.

To help, the district has posted a series of conservation videos showing how to find and fix irrigation system problems. [CLICK HERE](#) to go to that page. The video topics include the following:

- [How to have a healthy lawn with 30% less water](#)
- [How to tune up your sprinklers](#)
- [How to check your sprinklers every month.](#)

Bundesen said SSWD will provide a free water-wise house call if you request one. A technician will check out your home and property and offer suggestions for how to save water.

SSWD also provides free inspections to determine if you have leaks on your property and where they are. "Our techs have gotten really good at it," Bundesen said. "In one case, we helped a woman who had warm spot on her kitchen floor. It took a while, but we finally determined that the home's hot water line was leaking into the concrete slab."

To sign up for a house call or a leak investigation, [CLICK HERE](#).

## *Handy landscape irrigation scheduler tool*

The [Sacramento Regional Water Authority](#) (RWA) has developed an extraordinary free website tool that will automatically calculate how long and how often you should run each zone in your irrigation system.



The tool, called the Smart Irrigation Scheduler, takes into account what type of soil, sun exposure, slope, wind, plants and/or lawn you have on each zone as well as the type of sprinklers or drip lines and emitters you have, then almost instantly tells you how to program the controller for each zone to provide adequate water to that area while also adhering to the water agency's watering day restrictions.

If you choose to, you can even register and store a complete irrigation system profile for your property and consult it monthly to make any needed adjustments for weather changes.

The tool is located on the RWA's Be Water Smart website at <https://bewatersmart.info/>.

RWA notes that the tool "is offered free of charge and covers the Sacramento Region only." It uses the zip code of your property to access current weather values from the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) website.

CIMIS is a program of the Water Use and Efficiency Branch, California Department of Water Resources (DWR), that manages a network of more than 145 automated weather stations in California. It was developed in 1982 by the DWR and the University of California at Davis to assist California's irrigators with managing their water resources efficiently.

To go directly to the Smart Irrigation Scheduler and tutorial videos, [CLICK HERE](#).

## *Oriental fruit flies found in county*

Four oriental fruit flies – a very serious pest for both home gardens and agriculture – have been found in the Wilton area of Sacramento County.



According to the [Sacramento County Agricultural Commission](#), the pest is known to target over 230 different fruits, vegetables and plants. Important California crops at risk include stone fruits, citrus, dates, avocados, peppers and tomatoes.

The flies were found in a rural area in the vicinity of Clay Station and Dillard roads, between Sloughouse and Wilton. To eradicate them, the county will use a bait with an insecticide in it that will attract and kill the flies. The bait will be placed within a 1.5-mile radius around each detection site.

However, experts say that the most effective control is to not allow the flies to get into the state in the first place. They say the most common way pests enter the state is by “hitchhiking” in fruits and vegetables unknowingly brought back illegally by travelers as they return from infested regions or from packages of home-grown produce sent to people in California.

Officials ask everyone to help protect California's agricultural and natural resources by not bringing or shipping produce into the state from other areas.

[CLICK HERE](#) for the “Don't Pack a Pest” website with guidelines to follow when traveling or mailing packages.

## *Avoid scams when selling online*

If you sell things online through Craigslist, Facebook or other sites, beware of scams such as fake payments or refund requests, fake check over-payments and fake verification codes.

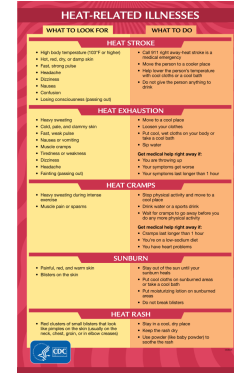
The Federal Trade Commission offers a list of common scams and how to avoid them. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.

## *Protect yourself from extreme heat*

August is historically among the hottest months of the year in the Sacramento area. Although our air-conditioned homes generally protect us during heat waves, there are times and circumstances that can be dangerous, particularly for the very young, the very old and our beloved pets.

Following are some [heat safety tips](#) from the CDC:

- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, they will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.
- Use your stove and oven less.
- Try to limit your outdoor activity to when it's coolest. Rest often in shady areas.
- Cut down on exercise during the heat. If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping for breath, STOP all activity. Get into a cool area or into the shade, and rest, especially if you become lightheaded, confused, weak or faint.
- Wear a sunscreen. Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool down and can make you dehydrated.
- Avoid hot and heavy meals. They add heat to your body!
- Drink more fluids. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Stay away from very sugary or alcoholic drinks. They actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- Know the signs. For a list of symptoms and treatments, [CLICK HERE](#) to download a PDF from the CDC.
- Monitor those at high risk. Those most vulnerable are infants and young children, people 65 and older, those who are overweight and people with heart disease or high blood pressure.



## *In case of heat, break glass*

If you see a pet or small child suffering because it has been locked in a hot car, don't be afraid to intervene. California is one of the states with a Good Samaritan law that protects you from legal consequences for breaking into a hot car to rescue pets or children.

One such Good Samaritan law was approved by the California Legislature in 2016 and protects people from being sued for property damage or from being charged with trespass if they rescue a pet from a hot car.

Another bill that took effect in 2021 extends that protection to people who break into a car to rescue a child. This only applies if a person is rescuing a child who is 6 years old or younger and appears to be in immediate danger from heat, cold, lack of adequate ventilation or other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability or death.

**NOTE:** Before breaking into a car, however, a Good Samaritan must first alert law enforcement to the situation and then must wait with the rescued child or pet until law enforcement or emergency personnel arrive on the scene. Also, don't get carried away while breaking in. The law stipulates that you make every effort to cause the least possible

damage in the process.

## Q&A

**Q:** Is there some way I can contact our patrol deputy by telephone?

**A:** Unfortunately, no. Because our deputies come from stations all around the county, it is difficult to provide them with a single dedicated cell phone. Instead, log into the website, go to the “Members Only” menu, click on the “Contact Patrol Deputy” link, then fill out the form and send your message. If a deputy is on duty, he or she will see it. If there is no deputy on duty at the time, it will be seen by the next deputy who comes on duty.

If your concern is immediate – for instance if you see someone behaving suspiciously – you should contact the Sheriff’s Department non-emergency line at (916) 874-5111. To circumvent the phone’s recordings, dial zero (0) as soon as the number answers. If you feel in imminent danger, call 911 immediately.

## HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

### IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

### TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Department:

1. Call the Sheriff’s Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff’s Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: [https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime\\_report.php](https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php)

### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff’s Department non-emergency line).

### GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it. The best way is via **EMAIL** at [wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com](mailto:wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com).

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