



Monthly Newsletter

August 2023

Door-to-door scammer still in the area

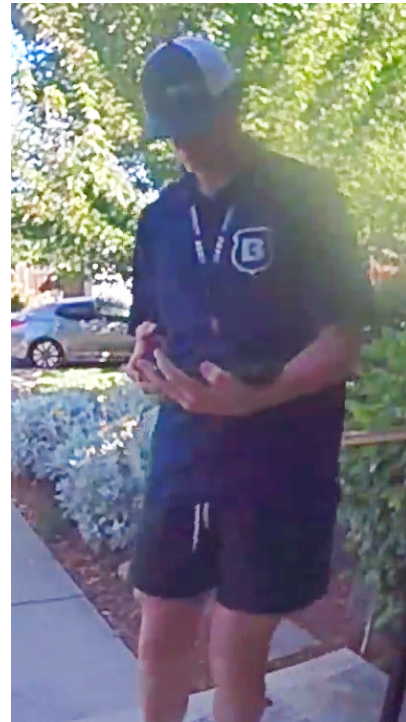
On July 25, we published a report about a young man posing as a Brinks security technician and claiming that he was assisting ADT in updating their systems.

Since then, the same young man (see image) has shown up at homes throughout the neighborhood. WDDNA members who have contacted ADT and Brinks in response to his visits have been told by both companies that the young man does not represent either one of them.

Homeowners should deny entrance to anyone claiming to represent a company or a utility company without first verifying their identity with the company or utility.

If you are approached by any person you don't know who asks to come into your home for any reason, do not comply unless you can independently identify their legitimacy with the company or utility they claim to represent.

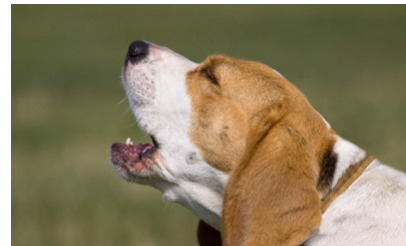
If you suspect the person to be a scammer, call the Sheriff's Department non-emergency number immediately at (916) 874-5115 and report it.



What to do about barking dogs

A WDDNA member recently asked us what could be done about barking dogs in nearby neighbors' yards.

"The neighbors' dogs bark constantly, sometimes beginning at 6 in the morning until after 11 at night or later," she wrote.



Sacramento County animal control officials report that barking dogs are among the most common and the most difficult problems they face. And, even though there is a county ordinance prohibiting loud and disturbing barking, citing a dog's owner is problematic.



Sacramento County ordinance Title 8.08.050 reads: "No owner of any animal, wild or domestic, shall permit or suffer the animal to do any of the following: ... Make loud or disturbing noises without provocation, including, but not limited to, chronic howling, yowling, barking, whining, or other utterances."

It sounds definitive, but according to Bill Davidson, a supervisor with Sacramento County Animal Control, it doesn't really work.

"The problem with the ordinance and getting it to court is the definition of what is 'excessive barking,'" he explained. "What qualifies as excessive in one neighborhood may not be in another and the barking may bother one neighbor more than another. Judges are reluctant to make rulings on this problem because there are no precise standards for the degree of nuisance. So, resolving the problem is really dependent on how neighbors choose to handle it among themselves."

This is not to say that County Animal Control officers do nothing.

"When we get a report about a barking dog problem, we typically send the dog owner a form letter that lets the person know that there has been a complaint about their dog barking excessively," Davidson explained. "The letter offers suggestions for how to control the dog and how to mediate the situation with neighbors. Or sometimes we will send an officer to the home to offer the same suggestions.

"If the complaint is repeated, we send a similar letter four or five times, weeks apart. But animal control cannot issue a citation because it is very difficult to establish what 'excessive' means," he noted.

What if the letters don't work?

According to Davidson, there is just one statutory option remaining for the neighbor. "The only alternative that remains is for the complaining neighbor to make a citizen's arrest and issue a citation to the dog owner under public nuisance [Penal Code 370](#)," he said.

But it's not quite that simple, he added.

"However, issuing this citation cannot be done without the support of the community affected by the nuisance. We interpret that community to be three households surrounding the source of the nuisance. So, the complainant must have the written support of two other neighboring residents. They must attest to the fact that they are fed up and ready to go to court over the situation."

Does this work? Not really, according to Davidson.

"In reality, that rarely happens. In the past few years, I have only been called to two such court cases," he recalled. "In one, the dog owner did not show up, so the judge issued the fine specified by the ordinance ... somewhere around \$200. In the second, the judge listened to all the parties involved, then ordered the dog's owner to buy a bark collar to see if it would teach the dog not to bark and he said they should come back in six months to see if it worked."

If all this is true, what's a neighbor to do?

“In the past, I have occasionally written personal letters to the dog owner in hopes of encouraging them to work out the problem with their neighbors,” Davidson said. “I always try to get the neighbors involved to work out the process among themselves. That always seems to have the most success.”

However, Davidson offered one caveat: “I would not advise the neighbor to start out by telling the neighbor to shut his dog up. Instead, open with a friendly discussion, perhaps ask the dog’s name, talk about how much you like dogs, be cordial and gradually work up to a discussion about barking. If you go in with guns blazing, it likely won’t work out well.”

Fentanyl awareness summit

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 932,000 people have died since 1999 from a drug overdose and nearly 75% of drug overdose deaths involve an opioid.

Sacramento County’s Opioid Coalition is hosting a Fentanyl Awareness and Action Summit to bring together professionals to highlight emerging strategies for managing the opioid epidemic/fentanyl crisis and best practices for prevention, treatment/recovery, harm reduction and community level solutions. The date, time, and location for the summit are as follows:

- Location: Sacramento State (University Union Building: Ballroom)
- Date: August 17, 2023
- Time: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Check-in 8:30 AM)

For more information about the Sacramento County Fentanyl Awareness and Action Summit, visit the [Sacramento County Opioid Coalition website](#).

West Nile Virus activity widespread

Over the last few weeks the incidence of West Nile Virus among mosquitos found in Sacramento County has been steadily increasing and currently remains intense and very widespread, according to [Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District](#) officials.



Gary Goodman, district manager, reports that the district has intensified ground treatments and is also considering the need for aerial spraying to quickly reduce mosquito populations and interrupt the virus transmission cycle.

The district recommends that homeowners drain any outdoor containers that may have standing water in them. It also urges people to wear long sleeves and pants when outside, use insect repellent and make sure your door and window screens are free of holes.

Go to <https://www.fightthebite.net/media/wnv-activity-map> for the most recent West Nile virus activity update map.

Glass smash-in update

In our July newsletter, we reported that there has been a rash of sliding glass door smash-ins in the nearby Sierra Oaks neighborhood. A similar smash-in took place in mid-July at a home on Elsdon Circle in our neighborhood.

In the July newsletter, we noted that one way to protect against such break-ins is to install security film over the glass. In response, a WDDNA member noted that homeowners can also install glass-break detectors.

“When I bought my house, which has a lot of large windows and two sliders in the back, I had an alarm system installed that included a glass-break detector,” the member explained.

“I can testify that they really work. In 1999, I was broken into. While I was at work someone threw a terra cotta pot through my smaller kitchen window. He climbed through the window and into the house, but by that time the alarm was blaring and the alarm company was calling on the phone, so he quickly left through the front door without having a chance to take anything.

“The read-out on my systems panel indicated that it was, in fact, the glass-break detector that triggered the alarm.”



Keep your garage door closed

On hot summer days, it can be tempting to leave your garage door partially or even fully open to improve air circulation when you are working around the yard. But don't do it.

Garage burglaries are among the most common in our neighborhood. If a garage door is left open even a little bit, burglars can get in to steal bicycles or other valuable items in a matter of minutes.

WDDNA produced a video about methods of protecting your garage from burglars. Click on the image above to watch it. Or go to our [Garage Security page](#) in the Videos Plus menu on our website.

How to choose a guard dog

If you are considering adopting a dog that will not only provide companionship, but also will be well suited to protect your family and property, you may find an article in *Mother Earth News* helpful. It deals with dog breed characteristics and how to train a guard dog so that it does its job without becoming a problem.

Although the headline on the article is "The best guard dog for your homestead," much of the information can be helpful to suburban homeowners, as well.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the article.

Member Q&A

Q: Who do I contact if I find an injured wild animal?

A: Wildlife Care Association is a nonprofit, volunteer-based association that is permitted by the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to care for injured wildlife.

Its volunteers receive more than 6,000 animals a year. Contact them if you find injured or abandoned baby songbirds, raptors, squirrels, opossums, rabbits, racoons, reptiles or amphibians.

- For the Wildlife Care Association, go to <https://wildlifecareassociation.com/>
- For fawns, contact Kindred Spirits Rescue at <https://kindredspiritsfawnrescue.org/>
- For bats, contact Norcal Bat Rescue at <https://norcalbats.org/>

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

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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