



# BERKELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## CRIME PREVENTION ALERT Cell Phone Thefts

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**Berkeley, California (December 20, 2012)** - The Berkeley Police Department (BPD) is currently investigating several reports of cell phone thefts through the use of a ruse. The suspects are targeting people's willingness to help others. The suspects will ask to use a victim's phone usually claiming the need to contact a sick family member. Once the suspect has the phone they drive off in a vehicle stealing the phone

BPD would like to remind and encourage people to employ a few crime prevention measures that can help reduce your risk as well as discourage those who commit these types of crimes.

- **Don't lend your phone** to anyone you don't know or take it out of your purse, pocket or bag to give someone the time, if asked.
- **Walk with purpose:** Project an assertive image that conveys you know where you are going.
- **Avoid Isolation:** Avoid uninhabited parks, parking lots, garages, and alleyways; stick to well-lit, high-traffic areas.
- **Keep a safe distance:** Don't let people get too close, even if they appear to have a reason, such as asking for the time.
- **Don't talk on cell phones or listen to iPods** when alone outside as they significantly limit awareness.
- **Trust your Instincts:** Trusting your own instincts that a situation seems "wrong" can be the best personal safety tool you have.

BPD is encouraging anyone to report suspicious persons or activity. In Berkeley dial 911 or (510)981-5911 from your cell for emergencies and/or crimes in progress. Dial (510)981-5900 to make a delayed or after the fact report.

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