

# Community Partnership Connection



## Cyber Shopping Safety Tips from the Sheriff's Cyber Crimes Unit

The dramatic increase in online shopping for the holidays has led to the creation of *Cyber Monday* on the Monday following Thanksgiving.

While cyber shoppers are hoping to find some great deals on *Cyber Monday*, this is also an important time for shoppers to increase their awareness of the risks associated with shopping online.

"Even when we take every precaution online, the reality is we have no control over who holds that data on the other end," Sergeant Dennis Carry of the Sheriff's Cyber Crimes Unit said.

"Great savings can often be obtained by shopping online," Sergeant Carry said, "But what happens to all that confidential data a shopper submits? What happens when a shopper selects to save their credit card information on a specific website? The reality is, a consumer has no way of knowing if that data, held in cyberspace, will be breached by a hacker."

**Shop Smart, Be Safe and Happy Holidays!**



**Our Cyber Crimes Unit offers the following safety tips for cyber shoppers:**

- ❗ Read your credit card statements as soon as you get them to make sure there are no unauthorized charges. If there is a discrepancy, report it immediately.
- ❗ Always type a website address yourself or access it through trusted search engines.
- ❗ Never click on an email link, taking you to a purchase site. The link may take you to a fraudulent site.
- ❗ Don't allow online sites to maintain your credit card information. Although it's convenient, this is risky.
- ❗ When having items shipped to your residence, make sure they are taken inside timely, preventing thieves from taking them or realizing nobody is home and potentially leaving yourself exposed to a burglary.
- ❗ Always use a credit card instead of debit or check. Credit cards have an additional level of consumer protection in the event of a fraudulent purchase or disputed transactions.
- ❗ If it just looks too good to be true, it probably is.

## Keep Your Holidays Safe and Merry while Shopping, Traveling & at Home

The holiday season is fast approaching so now is a good time to talk with family, friends and neighbors about keeping each other safe during this busy and exciting time. We want to help you start the holiday safety conversation by offering tips you should consider while shopping, traveling, or at home.

### SHOPPING:

- Lock your vehicle and hide valuables, preferably in the trunk or locked compartment.
- Before sunrise and after sunset, park and walk in well-lit areas and carry keys in your hand. Look inside and under your car before entering your vehicle.
- Stay alert to your surroundings and take a moment to glance around for possible suspicious persons, vehicles, and/or situations.
- When in crowded places, be alert for potential thieves. Don't overload yourself with packages. Maintain visibility and mobility to avoid potential threats.
- Be wary of strangers approaching you for any reason. The holiday season is notorious for "con-artists" who may attempt to distract you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.
- When possible, avoid carrying large amounts of cash and valuables, and avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Never leave personal belongings unattended.
- Avoid shopping alone; there is added safety when shopping with a companion.
- Keep a record of all your credit card numbers in a secure place at home.
- When shopping with children, keep a close eye on them at all times. Consider coaching them to go to a store clerk or security guard if they become separated and be sure they know their first and last name so they can advise someone who they are.
- Give children a contact phone number that they can carry on their person in case they do become lost.

### TRAVEL:

- Inform someone who's trustworthy where you will be and when you might be expected back to your residence.
- Ask a neighbor or other dependable person to watch your house and retrieve your newspapers and mail if possible.
- Prior to getting into your vehicle, take a look inside and around before entering. If you observe evidence of a possible burglary, call your local law enforcement agency. For the Sheriff's Office, call 785-WCSO (9276). Anticipate inclement weather and plan accordingly - carry chains, keep sufficient gas in the tank, and use extreme caution while driving.
- Be aware of your surroundings when you use an ATM. Have your card ready when you arrive. When you are done, put the card and cash away immediately. Don't count the money until you are in a safe place.
- If using a drive-thru ATM, keep your car running, your doors locked and all other windows up.

### HOME SAFETY:

- Be extra cautious about locking windows, sliders, and doors when leaving for any length of time. We suggest keeping all entrance points into your house secured while you're at home as well.
- Set indoor and outdoor lights on timers and think about doing the same with a television or radio to make it appear as if someone is home.
- Never keep gifts or valuable objects in plain view from any window. Close blinds, shutters, drapes, and curtains because if a burglar can see those items they may attempt to take them from you.
- If a person knocks at your door and you don't recognize them, don't feel obligated to open your door. Teach your children that by no means will they open the door to anyone prior to your knowledge and authorization.
- Keep your Personal Identification Number (PIN) secret. Never write it down and hide in your wallet.
- Keep a record of all your credit card numbers and company contact information at home in a secure place in case they are stolen, lost, or the cards need to be cancelled due to fraudulent activity.

## Donations Needed for Christmas on Corridor

The Reno Sparks Corridor Business Association and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office are asking for the public's help in making Christmas a little brighter for children and seniors who live in Reno's 4th, 5th and 6th Street "Corridor" by donating to the 17th annual *Christmas on the Corridor*.

*Christmas on the Corridor* started in 1996 as a simple opportunity to hand out cookies to a few hundred children and has grown into a huge annual community benefit. To help make this year's event a success, donations of the following new items are needed:

- Coats, hats, and gloves
- Backpacks and school supplies
- Toys of all kinds for all ages
- Games for teens and tweens, MP3 players, movie passes or electronics
- Monetary donations
- Shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Books on CD, puzzles, paint by number sets, slippers, lap blankets, and anything else that would be appreciated by seniors

The deadline for donations for this year's *Christmas on the Corridor* is December 17.

Donated items may be dropped off at the Sheriff's Community Work Program Office located at 350 S. Center Street (directly across from the Downtown Reno Library) between 6:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, contact Brooke Howard at (775) **785-4242**.



After completing 700 hours of intensive training to become Nevada peace officers, **36 recruits graduated from the Northern Nevada Law Enforcement Academy this month.** "Through their hard work and dedication, these men and women have earned the right to serve our great community as Police Officers and Deputy Sheriffs," said Academy Commander Lieutenant Greg Herrera of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. "This is a great achievement." The regional academy training took place over a 20 week period at the Regional Public Safety Training Center. In order to meet the numerous requirements for a Category I peace officer, recruits were trained and tested physically and academically. Academy topics include crime and crime scene investigation, constitutional law, criminal and civil law, search and seizure, defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operation, weapons handling, victim's rights, law enforcement ethics, and cultural awareness.

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***Dedicated Service in  
Partnership with our  
Community***

**KTVN and Sheriff's Office Partner on "Safety Watch"**



KTVN just launched a new segment called Safety Watch Q&A. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office was invited to partner as a subject matter expert twice a month to discuss efforts that keep you and your family safe from crime. This month **Undersheriff Tim Kuzanek** (with **Kristen Remington** above) talked about the backbone of our Sheriff's operations, our **ACES** program, which uses a data-driven approach to crime and prevention.



Washoe County Residents can now report crime from their iPhone or Android devices by installing the new WCSO app available for free from the Apple Store or Google Playstore.



**Deputy Ziggy Terelak** recently received the **Sparks Rotary Law Enforcement Award** in recognition of his leadership during one of the largest recruiting campaigns in recent Sheriff's Office history. During the last nine months he has been involved in the screening of over 1200 applicants for vacant positions throughout the WCSO.