

# Community Partnership Connection

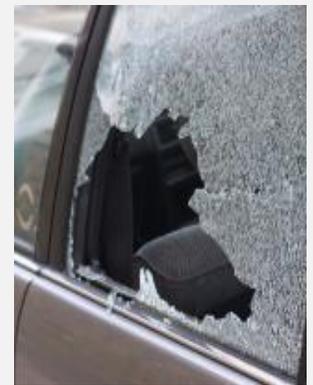


## Vehicle Burglaries Increase in the Spring/Summer How You Can Prevent from Being Burglarized

Vehicle Burglaries historically rise in the warmer Spring and Summer months. Luckily, you can easily reduce the risk of your vehicle being burglarized by following these simple suggestions.

1. Lock your doors and roll up your windows! This may sound obvious, but most of our recorded auto burglaries are due to unlocked doors. Becoming more conscious of making sure your vehicles doors are always locked is vital. Criminals are opportunistic, and are always looking for an easy target like an unlocked car. A common criminal tactic is to casually walk through parking lots simply pulling on car handles to see which ones are unlocked. These are called "crimes of opportunity". Don't let your vehicle be the easy target that criminals look for.
2. Don't leave valuables in your car. Most auto-burglaries have one common denominator- the vehicles have something valuable inside them worth stealing! If possible remove all valuables and all resemblance of valuables from your vehicle every time you exit your vehicle.
3. Hide or lock valuable away.
  - a. Place all items out of plain view BEFORE you find your parking space. You never know who is watching you.
  - b. Lock items in areas like your glove box or trunk instead of simply throwing the item under a seat or under a jacket.
  - c. Plan shopping trips so you don't unload bags full of valuables into your car and head back into the mall or shopping center. Try not to do this until you are ready to drive your vehicle to another destination.
4. Don't make criminals curious. Avoid using towels or blankets to cover valuable items. This can sometime peak a criminal's interest as to what is underneath the blanket.
5. Set your car-alarm if you have one. Look into getting a car-alarm if you don't. Criminals like to remain inconspicuous and under the radar. A loud audible alarm accompanied by flashing lights may be just enough to scare off a criminal before he takes any valuables.
6. Where you park your vehicle can sometimes mean the difference between being burglarized and not. When possible park your vehicle in well-lit, crowded areas. Look for a well-lit area nearest to the store, hotel, or building you are entering.

**Remember, it takes a thief 30 seconds to break into your vehicle and steal your valuables. It only takes you 30 seconds to take your valuables with you or lock them in your trunk.**



### Items Most Commonly Stolen from Vehicles:

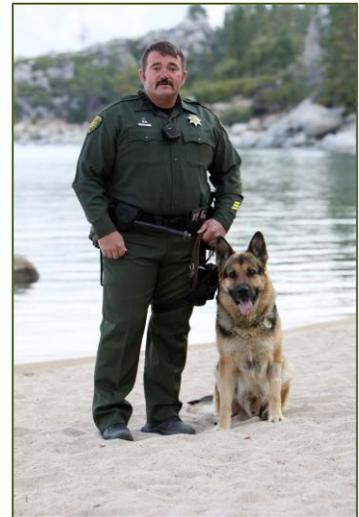
- ✓ Laptops & iPads
- ✓ iPods
- ✓ MP3 Players
- ✓ Stereo Systems
- ✓ Satellite Radios
- ✓ GPS Devices
- ✓ Cell Phones
- ✓ Wallets, Money, and Jewelry

## WCSO Mourns Death of K9 Zak

Washoe County Sheriff's Office K9 Zak died of natural causes February 13th in the presence of Deputy James McNeill, his handler for ten years.

Zak was an eleven-year-old black and tan German Shepherd who began working with the Sheriff's Office in 2001. His hard work and dedication were demonstrated daily through his work as a dual-purpose dog certified in patrol and narcotics functions. These skills led to numerous apprehensions and narcotics-related arrests. K9 Zak and Deputy McNeill were assigned to the Jail Division until October 2004 where they both were assigned to Reno Patrol. In January 2005, Zak and McNeill began their tenure as resident Deputies in Gerlach, Nevada and together they patrolled over 5,000 square miles together until being re-assigned back to Reno Patrol in May 2010.

After a partnership of 10 years, K9 Zak recently retired in January 2011, and passed of congestive heart failure. Zak was great with children and loved sharing an occasional ice cream with his partner after work. Deputy McNeill said "He would sit with me in the mornings and have coffee and (let me know) if I bounced him around too much in the back of the patrol truck. He brought smiles to hundreds of children. He has touched a lot of lives, especially mine."



*"Zak will definitely be missed at the Sheriff's Office. Zak, like our other service dogs, was one of the humble heroes willing to go places which were not safe even for our deputies. His presence will certainly be missed." - Sheriff Mike Haley*

## Sheriff's Office Alerts Public about Simulated Bath Salts That May be the "New High"



The Washoe County Sheriff's Office is alerting the public about a new way to get high that is perfectly legal, readily available, and can be extremely dangerous if consumed. This new high is sold under the guise of exotic, concentrated bath salts.

"These are not your everyday 'soak in the tub' brands of bath salts," said Diane Machen, a Criminalist with the Sheriff's Forensic Science Division. "These are highly concentrated substances packaged as bath salts that may contain mephedrone and the compound MDPV."

Machen said these types of chemicals are intentionally marketed toward teenagers because pushers try to convince youth that they can get high without really doing anything wrong since the substances aren't illegal. "Parents and children need to remember that just because something is legal and easily available for purchase, doesn't mean it can't be extremely harmful," she said. "The reality is, using these

chemicals may lead to serious consequences such as hallucinations and paranoia, creating a situation where the user may inflict serious harm to themselves and others." Fake bath salts are becoming a growing drug problem in several eastern states. Authorities in states such as Mississippi and Kentucky are already looking at banning their sale.

### What to Watch For:

Fake bath salts are not typically found at the standard bath and body store but are available over the counter at convenience stores, head shops and over the internet. The substance is usually sold in small containers with exotic names like *Tranquility*, *Red Dove*, *Ivory Snow* or *Vanilla Sky*. Small amounts of the powder are extremely expensive to buy. For example, a 500 mg bottle sells for almost 30 dollars. Machen encourages parents to stay ahead of the curve by educating themselves about the latest trends in substance abuse, particularly for substances that are not illegal, many of which were not even heard of a decade or so ago. "For this type of product parents need to be proactive," she said. "Many of these new ways to get high were not even heard of a decade or so ago. Our children are vulnerable if they don't understand the long-term damage they can cause." Know what to look for and talk to your children. Make sure they are cautious about what they're consuming and where it's coming from. Pay attention to news reports and research the internet for additional information about designer and synthetic drugs.



## Spotlight on...

### Sheriff's Annual Award Ceremony

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, Sheriff Haley recognized the following staff at the Board of County Commissioner's Chambers for their heroism, professionalism, and commitment to our community.

**BRONZE STAR** – Given to those who distinguish themselves in a duty of great responsibility in which extraordinary efforts were used and personal risk was involved.

Danny Arias, Dennis Carry, Tony Dilk, Ronnie Encinas, Frank Eubanks, Brian Foster, Greg Larramendy, Larry Lodge, Rick Pillon, Sean Wallace, and Brandon Zirkle for their efforts in response to SWAT callout in Sun Valley.

Abigail Biggar for her efforts in tracking an armed suspect.

Cole Bunyard for apprehending a suspect with a deadly weapon.

John Nemeth for bravery and courage in a deadly encounter.

**MEDAL FOR LIFESAVING** – Awarded to members of this agency who act to save or preserve a life or lives that would otherwise have expired without the direct action taken by the member.

Paul Poljack who saved man who hanged himself in suicide attempt.

**MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL** – To members of this Office who perform superior accomplishments that result in significant contributions to the efficient operation of the Office and/or the good of the community resulting in major improvements in technology, organization, procedures, or community relations, and may be based upon a single act or exceptional personal efforts.

Dennis Carry who organized regional Operation Northern Justice.

Benny Imbert for his successful efforts on Graffiti eradication.

**MEDAL OF VALOR** – Awarded to members of this agency who distinguish themselves by acts of heroism performed at personal risk of life or limb. These acts demonstrate great courage while facing extreme danger, but to a lesser degree than required for the Medal of Honor.

Rob Bowlin, Dave Frankel, Greg Herrera, Eric James (UNRPD), Phil Jones, and Pat Lee. Greg Nauman and Mike Wright for their extraordinary efforts in response to a SWAT callout in Sun Valley.

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL** – Awarded to members who have demonstrated exceptional achievement in assigned duties with loyalty and dedication over a prolonged period.

Darin Balaam for his extraordinary leadership commanding SWAT operation.

**MEDAL OF HONOR** – Is the Sheriff's highest award for members who distinguish themselves by heroism under exigent or life-threatening conditions, and consciously perform acts of bravery or outstanding feats while facing imminent danger without detriment to their mission.

Marc Bello for his bravery – selfless performance in response to a SWAT callout in Sun Valley.

**SHERIFF'S STAR** – At the discretion of the Sheriff, awarded to those who, by their actions, have demonstrated conduct that is clearly beyond normal expectations.

Jim LeBar who volunteers 30+ hours/week with Sheriff's Office assisting Detective Bureau.

Jim Kocijanski – 14 year reserve with Search and Rescue and developed a gun safety program to protect children from firearms.

### Metal Thefts On the Rise

Keep a close eye on your irrigation systems and on vacant homes and businesses in your neighborhood.

As the price of metal goes up, so do the number of metal thefts. In recent months, metal thefts have notably increased in Washoe County. The most commonly stolen metals are copper, aluminum, brass and bronze.

Thieves are pulling copper wire in lamp posts, irrigation systems, and cutting pipes and equipment left exposed or easily accessible.

How can you protect yourself?

- Secure foundation openings in the crawl space of your house with a good hasp and padlock.
- If possible, build a small chain link fence or cage enclosures around the outside portions of your commercial fixtures, heating and cooling systems.
- Don't store scrap metals outside, or within view.
- Contact local law enforcement if you see any suspicious activity.
- Check your business and residential properties regularly.

### Alert ID Now in Sparks!

Sparks is the latest region to go on-line with AlertID, which uses free online technology to help you access information on crime & natural disasters. Go to [www.alertid.com](http://www.alertid.com) for more information.

## Protect Yourself from Identity Theft: Detect (Part 2 of a 3 Part Series)

### Washoe County Sheriff's Office-Community Relations

911 E. Parr Boulevard  
Reno Nevada 89512  
775.785.6228  
775.785.6244

E-mail:  
[sheriffcommunityrelations@washoecounty.us](mailto:sheriffcommunityrelations@washoecounty.us)

Find us on the Web:  
[www.washoesherriff.com](http://www.washoesherriff.com)



*Dedicated Service in  
Partnership with our  
Community*

The best way to detect identity theft is to monitor your accounts and bank statements each month, and check your credit report on a regular basis. To order your free annual credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call toll-free at 877-322-8228.

Stay alert for other signs of identity theft such as:

- accounts you didn't open and debts on your accounts that you can't explain.
- fraudulent or inaccurate information on your credit reports, including accounts and personal information, like your Social Security number, address(es), name or initials, and employers.
- failing to receive bills or other mail. Follow up with creditors if your bills don't arrive on time. A missing bill could mean an identity thief has taken over your account and changed your billing address to cover his tracks.
- receiving credit cards that you didn't apply for.
- being denied credit, or being offered less favorable credit terms, like a high interest rate, for no apparent reason.
- getting calls or letters from debt collectors or businesses about merchandise or services you didn't buy.

How do you find out if you identity was stolen?

- You may find out when bill collection agencies contact you for overdue debts; debts you never incurred.
- You may find out when you apply for a mortgage or car loan and learn that problems with your credit history are holding up the loan.
- You may find out when you get something in the mail about an apartment you never rented, a house you never bought, or a job you never held.



The Sheriff's Office is now on **Twitter!**

To get the latest news, follow us at:

<http://twitter.com/washoesherriff>