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Spring  
2015

Chief James A. Cervera | Crime Prevention Chronicle - Your Quarterly Source for Crime Prevention Information!

# VB City of Virginia Beach Police Department Crime Prevention Unit



## Reaching New Levels of **Low**. Criminals Targeting the Elderly

While it has never been said that criminals play fair, it is even harder to accept when they target those that are especially vulnerable - our senior citizens. Just recently, elderly residents in both Norfolk and Virginia Beach reported that two women came to their doors, posing as Sentara home healthcare workers. These criminals were allowed into one of the homes and once inside, one distracted the victim while the other stole several hundred dollars in cash and property. In order to protect themselves, seniors must first be familiar with what scams are actually occurring, as well as how to recognize them. According to the **NCOA** (National Coalition on Aging), the top 10 scams involving elderly targets are as follows:

1. **Health Care/Medicare/Health Insurance Fraud.** Example: criminals pose as Medicare or healthcare employees.
2. **Counterfeit Prescription Drugs.** Example: victims buy prescriptions over the internet to save money, then receive unsafe, unapproved drugs which result in serious health issues, and sometimes even death.
3. **Funeral & Cemetery Scams.** Example: criminals will call the grieving relative of the deceased, claiming they had an unpaid debt, and try to extort money; or funeral homes will charge unnecessarily high fees to unknowing victims.
4. **Fraudulent Anti-Aging products.** Example: fake Botox injections. Make-shift labs create fake Botox but use the real main ingredient, which is one of the most toxic substances known, and the victim receives an injection of the unapproved drugs—with horrible results.
5. **Telemarketing/Phone Scams.** Example: criminals pose as a grandchild or other relative who just had an accident or was unlawfully jailed and needs money wired immediately. IRS scams are HUGE right now. Criminal call random numbers, threatening enforcement action unless the victims pay money owed to the "IRS". Fake charity scammers also place calls after natural disasters.
6. **Internet Fraud.** Example: Phishing— criminals pose as a legitimate company, or even the IRS, and ask individuals to verify and update personal information, which is later used fraudulently by the criminal.
7. **Investment Schemes.** Example: criminals target seniors who are looking to safeguard their cash and use pyramid schemes or promises of quick financial growth through complicated investment strategies.
8. **Homeowner/Reverse Mortgage Scams.** Example: a scammer will offer other property or money in exchange for the title to the victim's home and the victim ends up losing their home.
9. **Sweepstakes & Lottery Scams.** Example: victim is told they won a prize and receives a check, which eventually bounces, but in the meantime the victim sends money to cover the prize 'fees and taxes.'
10. **The Grandparent Scam.** Example: criminal calls an elderly victim posing as their grandchild in need of financial assistance, but insists they not tell his/her parents as they will get into trouble. This is especially notorious as the criminal plays on the victim's heartstrings.

### Fraud Prevention Tips:

- Never open your door to a stranger! Ask for and verify business ID's by calling the business directly. Solicitors should have City-issued solicitor permits with them when they knock on doors.
- Do not give out personal information over the internet or to anyone calling you. Your bank and other businesses will never send out emails or make calls asking for your personal information or for it to be updated.
- Discuss finances and investment options with reputable, verified businesses only (again, if it sounds too good to be true).
- If you do get a call from someone you believe is actually a grandchild or other relative and needs assistance, take a moment to call a parent or someone who can verify that the grandchild/other relative is actually the one calling you and that they in fact need help.
- Place your phone number on the **National Do Not Call Registry** to avoid telemarketers by registering at: <https://www.donotcall.gov/>.
- If you ever see anything or notice anyone suspicious, call the Police Non-emergency number at **757-385-5000** and remember, you are never "bothering" us when you call.

**REMEMBER:** If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is! Always do your homework first. Never give out your personal information in response to a call or email, and NEVER allow someone into your home without carefully verifying their identity.

For more detailed prevention information, please see **Fraud Prevention Tips** provided above.

## **THE BEST DEFENSE**

### ***A Free Self-Defense and Personal Safety Workshop***

Did you know that according to the FBI's 2013 Uniform Crime Report, an estimated 1,163,146 violent crimes occurred nationwide, with aggravated assaults accounting for 62.3% of those violent crimes reported to law enforcement? Parents, are you aware that between 20-25% women will experience a completed and/or attempted rape during their college career? So what can we do to avoid becoming another statistic? Simple awareness, preparedness, and having a plan of action can make the difference between staying safe or becoming another victim, and here is a great opportunity to learn how.

On Saturday, May 2, 2015, the Virginia Beach Police Department, in partnership with Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation will host "**The Best Defense**," a free self-defense and personal safety workshop at the Princess Anne Recreation Center (1400 Nimmo Pkwy). During the course, participants will learn how to stay safe in a variety of situations, and how to physically escape from a variety of holds, chokeholds, bear-hugs, and even supine holds. This FREE event is open to the public, and anyone 12 years old and up can attend (those under the age of 16 must participate with a parent or guardian) all any Virginia Beach Recreation Center to register right away—these classes fill up quickly!



This young participant escaped from the 'attacker' and took him down!



Participants learning how to escape from a 'supine' restraint.

#### **PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS - WHEN YOU'RE OUT AND ABOUT**

- Stay alert - actively scan your surroundings and always know who is in front and behind you. Walk with purpose and make brief eye contact with people around you.
- Always trust your instincts! If someone or something makes you uncomfortable, leave and go to a safe location.
- If you see something suspicious, call the Police Non-Emergency number (757-385-5000) right away. Write down vehicle tag numbers and descriptions of suspects or suspicious individuals. If you can, take a picture with a cell phone or pocket camera.
- Avoid walking, jogging or biking alone at night unless absolutely necessary. Avoid headphones during these activities.
- Walk near the curb and away from alleyways and doorways. Face traffic when walking so you can see approaching vehicles.
- Try to use ATM's during the daytime; avoid locations where people are "hanging out."
- Do not overburden yourself with packages and a bulky purse. Keep your cash, credit cards (carry a bare minimum) and ID in a front pocket.
- Have a cell phone handy at all times.
- The best protection for children is DIRECT ADULT SUPERVISION! Know where they are and who they are with at all times.
- If you are attacked, make noise (yell for help!) and run to the nearest residence or business. Call 911 immediately to report the crime.
- If someone tries to rob you - don't resist! Your property can be replaced - you can't!
- Secure your valuables (cameras, cell phones, wallets, etc.) while you are at the beach

## Are You Prepared to Deal with an Active Threat at Work?



Having to face an armed individual with bad intentions in your workplace is every person's worst nightmare. You can't prevent all bad situations, you can only respond to them. The aggressor's actions are not your fault; failure to plan and failure to train is. All employees can help prevent and prepare for potential active threat situations. Preparation can reduce the risk of one of these incidents and if one occurs, can mitigate or reduce the number of potential victims.

The ATCD (Active Threat Citizens' Defense) course aims to enhance preparedness for citizens so that they may "rise to the occasion" instead of "settle to the level of their training." This training will show you how to recognize hostile situations and attempt to diffuse them, realize how items in your office can be utilized to defend yourself and save your life, understand how the body reacts during stressful situations, and test your newly acquired survival skills during our hands-on, interactive, scenario based training. In a time where workplace violence is becoming more common, we can no longer stand by and hope this never happens to us. Learning how to respond if confronted with an active threat is not paranoia, its preparedness.

To find out more about this training or to set up a training session for your business, contact the Crime Prevention Unit at phone: 757-385-1006 or email: [pdcpu@vb.gov](mailto:pdcpu@vb.gov).

## VIRGINIA BEACH BUSINESS WATCH TOGETHER WE CAN REDUCE CRIME

TAKE A BITE OUT OF  
**CRIME**



My friends and I at the Virginia Beach Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit are excited to help you learn how you can reduce the opportunity for crime to strike you or your business. Watch for our advice and events to learn more each month. This month I would like to invite you to call now and sign up for Business Watch. We will make you an appointment to do a free security assessment of your business and even teach your staff how to "Take A Bit Out Of Crime".

VBPD  
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Building 15  
2509 Princess Anne Rd.  
Virginia Beach, VA. 23456

Business Watch  
office: 757-385-1006  
desk 757-385-1371  
fax: 757-385-1064  
email: [bdetrich@vb.gov](mailto:bdetrich@vb.gov)



# final thoughts ...



*With the arrival of warmer weather and longer hours of daylight, more people will be out and about (and not always with the best intentions). Please stay alert and aware of your surroundings. Be sure to remove all valuables when exiting your vehicle, and lock it up. Don't leave out bicycles, yard equipment, or other items that thieves may be tempted to take from your yard or driveway.*

*Finally, if you see something or someone suspicious, trust your instincts and call the Police Non-Emergency number 757-385-5000.*

## CAC Meetings

*All meetings are held at 7pm*

- 1st Pct: 1st Tuesday, Municipal Center  
2424 Courthouse Drive, Bldg 19
- 2nd Pct: 2nd Wednesday, Second Precinct  
820 Virginia Beach Boulevard
- 3rd Pct: 3rd Thursday, Williams Farm Rec Center  
5252 Learning Circle
- 4th Pct: 4th Thursday, Glenwood Community Center  
2097 Roundhill Road

## SAVE THE DATE!!

National Night Out will be held Tuesday evening, August 4, 2015. Start planning your community event now! Register your neighborhood for a visit from the VBPD: <http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/police/opsdiv/Pages/RequestCPServices.aspx>. After you register with the Crime Prevention Unit, register your event on the National Town Watch site at <http://www.nationalnightout.org>

## TRIAD/S.A.L.T. Meetings

Held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10am, Marian Manor (5345 Marian Lane). *Contact:* MPO Jason Karangelen at 385-1006

## CITIZENS' POLICE ACADEMY

Two sessions of the Citizens' Police Academy are held per year, once in the spring and again in the fall.

Register at: <http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/police/opsdiv/Pages/Virginia-Beach-Citizens-Police-Academy.aspx>

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**For additional information, call VBPD Crime Prevention Unit at 757-385-1006.**



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twitter.com/VBPD



youtube.com/VBPDPIO

**Virginia Beach Police Department**

**Crime Prevention Unit**

**2441 Princess Anne Road**

**Municipal Center, Building #15**

**Virginia Beach, VA 23456**