



NEWS RELEASE



EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date Released: May 22, 2014

Subject: Smash and Grab Bandits

Contact: (PIO) Sergeant Steve Watson

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Released by: Sergeant Watson

The Eureka Police Department is seeking the public's help in identifying the suspect(s) involved in a recent rash of "smash and grab" (glass break) commercial burglaries occurring in Eureka. Since January of this year, EPD has identified at least 29 burglaries to retail stores sharing a similar *modus operandi* in which 1-2 male suspects use objects (such as rocks, bricks, and miscellaneous tools) to force entry via glass break into closed, alarmed businesses. This is primarily occurring under the cover of darkness during the early morning hours.

The suspect(s) typically grabs selected merchandise and then quickly flees the scene on foot or bicycle. The suspect(s) appears to be a white or light-skinned Hispanic male in his 20's with a medium to slender build. He typically wears dark clothing with a hat and/or hood and attempts to obscure his face from surveillance cameras. It is believed the same 1-2 individuals are responsible for the majority of these burglaries. Items taken have included clothing (such as shirts and designer jeans), tobacco, cash, electronics, jewelry, and tools. Most of these burglaries have occurred in the Henderson Center, Old Town, and Downtown (4th/5th Street corridor) business districts.

Anyone with information concerning these crimes is asked to contact the Eureka Police Department at (707) 441-4060 (main office) or (707) 441-4044 (dispatch).



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In response to these burglaries, EPD has significantly increased foot and vehicle patrols in the affected areas. Numerous suspicious subjects have been contacted during these directed patrols and officers have made several arrests of individuals suspected of theft and drug related activity. However, these suspects have not been definitively connected to any of the smash and grab burglaries.

Retailers should consider implementing a number of “target-hardening” options to reduce their future burglary risks. These preventative actions include:

- 1) **Upgrading external security.** Adopting measures such as:
 - strengthening locks and reinforcing doors and windows;
 - installing physical barriers such as strengthened glass, shutters, metal grilles, or window/glass protection films in windows and glass doors;
 - installing high definition, quality video cameras to monitor possible entry points (ideally, these cameras should record to a hard drive and provide good image quality in low light conditions); and
 - installing security lighting at entry points
- 2) **Installing audible, monitored burglar alarms.**
- 3) **Safeguarding cash and valuable stock.** This includes:
 - removing high-value goods from window displays;
 - concealing goods;
 - using safes or secure cages for the most valuable items in stockrooms;
 - marking valuable goods such as computers with traceable, hard-to-remove identification numbers;
 - banking cash each day; and
 - leaving empty cash registers open at night (to prevent their being broken into).
- 4) **Employing security guards after hours.**
- 5) **Utilizing environmental design modifications.** This entails changing landscaping and design features to (1) discourage access to all but intended users, (2) allow intruders to be more easily spotted. Also, revise landscaping to remove the convenient “tools” burglars may use as a projectile through a window (such as large river rocks, bricks etc.).

Retailers wishing to have an officer visit their store to assess security and burglary prevention options may contact EPD to set up an appointment.



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For additional helpful crime prevention tips visit the following websites:

<http://www.popcenter.org/25techniques/>

http://www.popcenter.org/problems/burglary_retail/

Interesting Facts

- Most retail and residential burglars are young men who commit a variety of predatory crimes. Many have drug or alcohol habits.
- A small number of retail burglars are highly prolific, accounting for many burglaries.
- Most retail burglaries occur at night or on weekends, when stores are closed (while most residential burglaries occur on weekday afternoons when residents are not likely to be home).
- Retail burglars generally enter the premises through doors or windows. They force door locks, break through doors or side panels, or force/break windows.

*Information courtesy of the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, Guide No. 15 (2002), **Burglary of Retail Establishments**

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Wanted: Smash & Grab Bandit

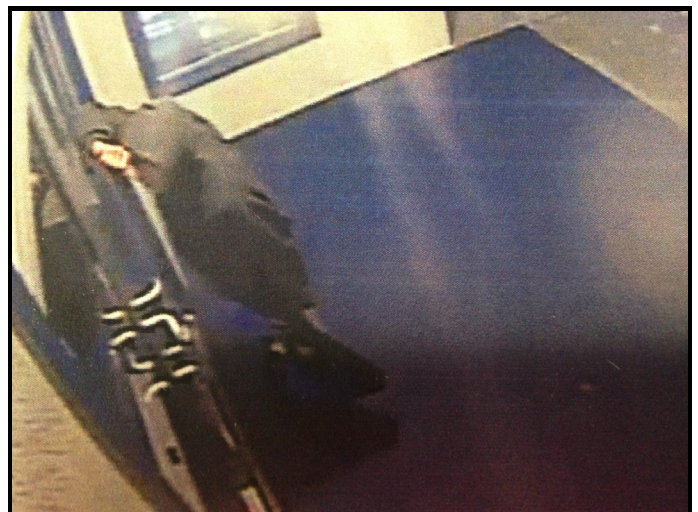
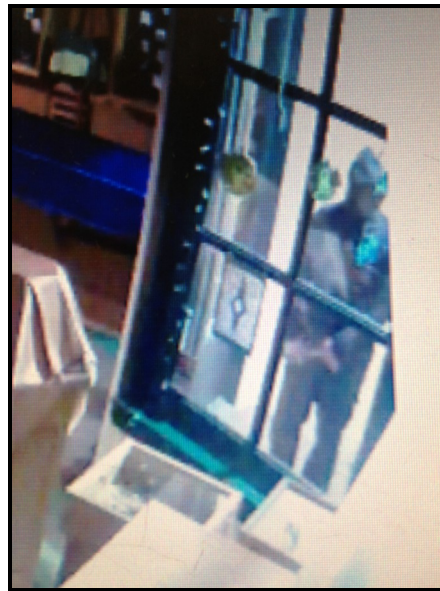


604 C Street
Eureka, CA 95501

(707) 441-4060
(main office)

(707) 441-4044
(dispatch)

EPD is seeking to identify the suspect(s) involved in a recent rash of “smash and grab” (glass break) commercial burglaries occurring in Eureka. Over the past 4-5 months, EPD has identified at least 29 burglaries to retail stores sharing a similar modus operandi in which 1-2 male suspects use objects (such as rocks, bricks, and misc. tools) to force entry into closed, alarmed businesses (via glass break) during the early morning hours. The suspect(s) quickly grabs selected merchandise and then flees the scene on foot or bicycle. The suspect(s) appears to be a white or light-skinned Hispanic male in his 20’s with a medium to slender build. He typically wears dark clothing with a hat and/or hood and attempts to obscure his face from surveillance cameras. It is believed the same 1-2 individuals are responsible for the majority of these burglaries. Items taken have included clothing (shirts and designer jeans etc.), tobacco, cash, electronics, jewelry, and tools. Anyone with information concerning these crimes is asked to contact the Eureka Police Department.



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