



San Leandro Police Department Crime Prevention News & Tips



Laptop/Tablet Security

SUMMER, 2012

Laptop usage has increased dramatically over the past several years. In many instances, consumers have replaced their desktop PC's with laptops. For those individuals who travel on a regular basis they are invaluable as downtime in airports and on planes can be spent working or staying in touch with family and friends.

QUICK FACTS

Thinking of taking your laptop on the road? It is a great way to work and stay in touch when you are out and about, but you need to take some steps to keep your laptop safe — and in your possession. Here are some things you can do to keep track of your laptop:

- Treat it like cash.
- Get it out of the car . . . don't ever leave it behind.
- Keep it locked . . . use a security cable.
- Keep it off the floor . . . or at least between your feet.
- Keep passwords separate . . . not near the laptop or case.
- Do not leave it "for just a sec" . . . no matter where you are.
- Pay attention in airports . . . especially at security.
- Use bells and whistles . . . if you have an alarm, turn it on.

KEEPING LAPTOPS FROM GETTING LOST OR STOLEN

A laptop computer defines convenience and mobility. It enables you to work from home, a hotel room, a conference hall, or a coffee shop. Maybe you've taken steps to secure the data on your laptop. You've installed a firewall. You update your antivirus software. You protect your information with a strong password. You encrypt your data, and you're too smart to fall for those emails that ask for your personal information. But what about the laptop itself? A minor distraction is all it takes for your laptop to vanish. If it does, you may lose more than an expensive piece of hardware. The fact is, if your data protections aren't up to par, that sensitive and valuable information in your laptop may be a magnet for an identity thief.

Chances are you've heard stories about stolen laptops on the news or from friends and colleagues. No one thinks their laptop will be stolen—at least not until they find the trunk of their car broken into, notice that their laptop isn't waiting at the other side of airport security, or get a refill at the local java joint only to turn around and find their laptop gone.



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LAPTOP SECURITY *(Continued from page 1)*

OnGuardOnline suggests keeping these tips in mind when you take your laptop out and about:

- **Treat your laptop like cash.** If you had a wad of money sitting out in a public place, would you turn your back on it — even for just a minute? Would you put it in checked luggage? Leave it on the backseat of your car? Of course not. Keep a careful eye on your laptop just as you would a pile of cash.
- **Keep it locked.** Whether you are using your laptop in the office, a hotel, or some other public place, a security device can make it more difficult for someone to steal it. Use a laptop security cable: attach it to something immovable or to a heavy piece of furniture that's difficult to move — a table or a desk.
- **Keep it off the floor.** No matter where you are in public — at a conference, a coffee shop, or a registration desk — avoid putting your laptop on the floor. If you must put it down, place it between your feet or at least up against your leg, so that you're aware of it.
- **Keep your passwords elsewhere.** Remembering strong passwords or access numbers can be difficult. However, leaving it either in a laptop carrying case or on your laptop is like leaving the keys in your car.
- **Mind the bag.** When you take your laptop on the road, carrying it in a computer case may advertise what's inside. Consider using a suitcase, a padded briefcase or a backpack instead.
- **Get it out of the car.** Don't leave your laptop in the car — not on the seat, not in the trunk. Parked cars are a favorite target of laptop thieves; don't help them by leaving your laptop in the vehicle.
- **Don't leave it "for just a minute."** Your conference colleagues seem trustworthy, so you're comfortable leaving your laptop while you network during a break. The people at the coffee shop seem nice, so you ask them to keep an eye on it while you use the restroom. Don't leave your laptop unguarded — even for a minute. Take it with you if you can, or at least use a cable to secure it to something heavy.
- **Pay attention in airports.** Keep your eye on your laptop as you go through security. Hold onto it until the person in front of you has gone through the metal detector — and keep an eye out when it emerges on the other side of the screener. The confusion and shuffle of security checkpoints can be fertile ground for theft.
- **Be vigilant in hotels.** If you stay in hotels, a security cable may not be enough. Try not to leave your laptop out in your room. Rather, use the safe in your room if there is one. If you're using a security cable to lock down your laptop, consider hanging the "do not disturb" sign on your door.
- **Use bells and whistles.** Depending on your security needs, an alarm can

be a useful tool. Some laptop alarms sound when there's unexpected motion, or when the computer moves outside a specified range around you. Or consider a kind of "lo-jack" for your laptop: a program that reports the location of your stolen laptop once it's connected to the internet.

- **Where to turn for help.** If your laptop is stolen, report it immediately to the local authorities. If it's your business laptop that's missing, also immediately notify your employer. You may also wish to review the FTC's information for businesses about data breaches. If it's your personal laptop and you fear that your information may be misused by an identity thief, visit the FTC's Identity Theft page at <http://www.ftc.gov/> or OnGuard Online at <http://onguardonline.gov/>.

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New Additions to the PD Website



The San Leandro Police Department has recently added two new features to its website to increase customer service and to provide better communication with residents, business owners and visitors.

TIP411

The community now has the ability to provide confidential “tips” to the San Leandro Police Department by texting 847411. This information is 100% confidential. Tip411 allows anyone with a cell phone to provide information anonymously to the San Leandro Police Department via text message. This type of “on demand” capability enables the public to provide immediate information while maintaining anonymity.

For more information on TIP411 please visit the San Leandro Police Department website at www.sanleandro.org/depts/pd/at.asp.



NIXLE—Community Notification Service

The San Leandro Police Department has launched a Community Notification Service called “NIXLE” which is designed to improve communication with people who live, work, and visit San Leandro. NIXLE is in addition to the City’s Code Red notification system, which is currently used to notify residents during an emergency situation. Nixle is a secure communications service available to municipal, county, and state government agencies and has the capability of using attachments.

The Nixle system is free (standard text message rates apply for subscribers who do not have text plans with their cell phone providers) and there is no SPAM or advertising associated with these messages.

Nixle allows the Police Department to deliver messages to citizens via e-mail and cell phones, effectively expanding the Department’s community outreach efforts.

For more information, please visit the Police Department’s website at http://www.sanleandro.org/depts/pd/nixle_community_notification_service.asp or the Nixle website at <http://www.nixle.com/>.

Numbers to know:

- Non-emergency** 577-2740
- General Business** 577-2740
- Administration Division** 577-3253
- Records Section** 577-3217
- Traffic Division** 577-3208
- Animal Control** 577-3206
- Community Compliance** 577-3260
- Abandoned Vehicles** 577-3260
- Recruiting** 577-3247
- Neighborhood Watch** 577-3248
- Crime Free Multi-Housing** 577-3252



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Do your vacation plans this summer include international travel?

If so, the Bureau of Consular Affairs, a part of the U.S. Department of State, has a website that may be of assistance to you —<http://www.travel.state.gov>. This website contains information on passports, visas, and living abroad. Additionally, the site posts travel alerts and travel warnings.

Travel Alerts are issued to distribute information about short-term conditions, either transnational or within a particular country, that pose significant risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert.

Travel Warnings are issued when long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable lead the State Department to recommend that Americans avoid or consider the risk of travel to that country. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate, or because of a drawdown of its staff.

If you are planning on driving while visiting another country, it is important to understand the rules and laws of the road in other countries. This website will provide you with country-specific regulations as well as general tips on road safety including carjacking and personal security.

Additionally, this site covers emergency situations such as loss of a passport, a death overseas, or victim of a crime. Information is also provided for Americans who are considering living abroad.

Students who have the opportunity to travel or study in another country should check out <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/> for safety tips, emergency information and travel document requirements.

SMART TRAVELER PROGRAM (STEP)

Through Travel.State.Gov you can sign up for the free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. This will provide you with the most current information regarding the country where you will be traveling or living including Travel Alerts or Travel Warnings. STEP can also be of assistance to travelers during emergencies such as loss of a passport. This program is set up to aid U.S. citizens in evacuating a country during natural disasters or civil unrest.

You can sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program through the following link:

<https://step.state.gov>.



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San Leandro Police Department

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