



## RIVER FOREST CRIME ALERT

The River Forest Police Department wants to make our community aware of a recent "RUSE" burglary that occurred on the 800 block of Franklin. On March 19<sup>th</sup> at approx. 5:15 PM, a male, about 5'10 to 6'00 ft. tall, heavy build, dark hair, olive complexion, described as Hispanic or eastern European descent, wearing a tan tool belt, convinced the resident there was an electrical problem and needed to enter the house. Once inside, the resident was distracted and a theft occurred.

These type of "RUSE" burglaries typically use the same Modus Operandi (M.O.) or method of operation. The offender pretends to be a utility worker (gas, electrical or water) and convinces the homeowner there is an emergency and they need to enter the home to check the cause. Or, they pretend to be "contractors" who are seeking business. They will convince the homeowner to walk outside with them to check their roof, siding or driveway, while their partner enters the home and commits a theft. They communicate with each other via cell phone or walkie-talkie.

They typically target elderly residents as they tend to be easily distracted. We believe they choose their target while driving around the area and spotting an elderly resident enter their home or while out in their yard. The police are aware of several clans or families who send their members out to commit these type of crimes. Their area of operation is usually several counties wide. Apprehension is difficult as the police receive delayed reports and limited information. In the most recent incident, no vehicle or partner information was obtained.

**If someone approaches you and tells you they need to enter your home, please tell them to wait outside while you verify their story.** Call the police immediately (911) and we can check them out. If they wait around, they may be legitimate, if they leave, you may have diverted a crime. Please try to ascertain the type of vehicle they are driving and if possible a license plate number.

If you have had a similar incident or information about the above mentioned incident please call our Detectives at (708) 366-7125. Also we ask that you encourage your neighbors to sign-up for these Crime Alerts.

Thank you

Gregory Weiss-Chief of Police