Crime ALERT

11/04/09
Laptop Thefts – Parnassus Campus

In the past week, there were a number of laptop/electronic devices reported stolen from Parnassus Campus buildings.

On Tuesday, October 27, 2009 at 11:20 A.M., two incidents of theft were reported from the 5th floor of the School of Nursing at 2 Koret Way. A personally owned DVD player and laptop were reported stolen from a secured office area. The theft occurred between 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, October 22, 2009 and 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, October 27, 2009.

On Thursday, October 29, 2009 at 9:15 A.M., an incident of theft was reported from the Clinical Sciences Building at 521 Parnassus Avenue. A laptop was stolen from a secured office area. The theft occurred between 10:30 P.M. on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 and 9:00 A.M. on Thursday, October 29, 2009.

On Thursday, October 29, 2009 at 12:15 P.M., an incident of theft was reported from the UC Hall at 533 Parnassus Avenue. A laptop was stolen from a secured office area. The theft occurred between 5:00 P.M. on Friday, October 23, 2009 and 8:00 A.M. on Thursday, October 29, 2009.

On Thursday, October 29, 2009 at 1:00 P.M., an incident of theft was reported from the 3rd floor of the Medical Sciences Building at 513 Parnassus Avenue. A laptop was stolen from a secured office area. The theft occurred between mid-September, 2009 and 12:30 P.M. on Thursday, October 29, 2009.

Currently, there are no suspect details available. Staff is advised to report suspicious persons immediately to the UCSF Police Department at 476-1414.

Laptop and Computer Theft Prevention Tips:
Suspects look for crimes of opportunity and certain measures can be followed to minimize your chances of becoming a victim of laptop and computer theft. These are:

- Encrypt the most important data. Install software that makes documents stored in a laptop computer unreadable to anyone without a correct password. The most valuable part of a stolen laptop is the data. Many groups have cash bounties out for particular information that can be resold for identity theft or competitive use. It is very important that you encrypt info on your laptop/computer device to not only protect UCSF property and data, but also to protect yourself against loss of personal property and data. Not encrypting your laptop/computer device exposes UCSF to liability issues. Proper encryption provides safe harbor against both state and federal penalties against the individual as well as the institution.
- Never leave your laptop unattended. Take it with you, or you run the risk that it won't be there when you return.

Together for a Safe and Crime Free Campus

Pamela E. Roskowski
Chief of Police

This alert is a public service to the University community and in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Act of 1998
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- Keep your laptop in your physical possession at all times and pay particular attention at the following locations: airports, hotels, car rental agencies, offices, restaurants, college campuses, restrooms, payphones, libraries, bars, hospitals, conferences centers, meeting rooms, coffee shops, train stations and bus terminals.

- Some UCSF facilities are open to the public. Know who works in your area and who doesn’t belong there. Don’t let unaccompanied strangers wander around in your workplace. Offer assistance and deliver the visitors to their destinations.

- Disguise your carrying case. By carrying your laptop in a case designed specifically for computers, you alert thieves to the fact that you are carrying something valuable. Instead, consider carrying your laptop in an ordinary piece of luggage, satchel, briefcase or other inconspicuous bag.

- Record your laptop’s serial number, make and model information in your purse or wallet so if your computer is stolen, the information will be readily available when you file a police report. Also, keep an extra copy of this information at home.

- Etch, engrave or permanently mark your computer with your name and phone number. You might also consider placing several of your business cards inside carrying case pockets.

- Identify your carrying case in some unusual way. Brightly colored tape, yarn or tags will help you to locate your bag in the event it comes up missing. When traveling, you might also consider affixing something brightly colored to your actual laptop.

- If your laptop must be left in your car, store it in the trunk of the vehicle prior to arriving at the final destination.

- Regularly back up information. Make sure you store this information separately in case your computer is stolen.

- In the event that your laptop is lost or stolen, make sure you report it missing to your employer and Police Department as soon as possible.

- Cable locks will deter, but not guaranteed to prevent the theft of laptops and computers because they can easily be cut. For higher security measures, the following are options to consider:
  - Two-way wireless security alarms for laptops consist of an alarm installed on the computer itself and a remote key-chain device. If the alarm detects movement, it first checks whether you’re nearby. If not, your key-chain remote is alerted, emitting a “chirp.” You can then choose to trigger the 110-decibel alarm on your laptop. The alarm can also be set to trigger solely on detecting motion.
  - Another type of alarm works by setting up a security perimeter for the laptop. Moving the laptop beyond the perimeter sets off an alarm, locks keys to encrypted files, and disables the computer, making it useless to unauthorized users.

Help fight crime by reporting suspicious activity to UCSF PD immediately. For emergency or in-progress events, dial 9-911 when using on-campus land lines and (415) 476-6911 when using cell phones. For non-emergency calls, please dial (415) 476-1414.

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