

**Stanislaus County
SHERIFF'S
DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Adam Christianson
250 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358



MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE 11-24-09
TIME 5:00 PM**

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PUTS GRINCHES ON NOTICE

MODESTO, CA- The Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department is putting thieves on notice. The next time you try to take something that doesn't belong to you, you better be ready to pay the consequences. For the past few years, Sheriff's detectives have been very creative and proactive in going after property thieves.

"This is not something that we typically want to advertise," said Detective Lieutenant Mick Hardenbrook. "We have been doing this long enough that some of the thieves are aware we are out there and we just want the public to know that we are out there and we are addressing the problem."

"According to recent FBI crime statistics, property crimes in the unincorporated areas of Stanislaus County have decreased significantly," said Undersheriff Bill Heyne. "I believe that this is a direct result of all of the proactive work from our detectives." Detectives have been using high-tech electronic surveillance to observe and arrest property crime offenders. The Stanislaus Farm Bureau and the U.S. Marshal's Office have provided some of this high-tech equipment to the investigators to use.

This often begins with the detective placing a desirable item in a high theft area and watching the item until it gets stolen. The types of devices that are being used are still being kept secret, but there is a nearly perfect conviction rate once the thieves are caught. Almost every defendant takes a plea deal rather than trying to fight the case in the face of overwhelming electronic evidence.

This results in the savings of a lot of time and money that would normally have to be used to get a conviction. It also assures that citizens do not have to testify since the entire case is made by the detectives and the equipment.

"This is not new to law enforcement," said Detective Sergeant Larry Seymour. "We see a problem and have to find creative ways to combat the issue. I feel that we have been very successful in deterring some of these crimes by using state of the art surveillance devices that make proving the crime much easier."

The department is planning on stepping up the operations for the upcoming holiday season. "During the holiday seasons we generally see a spike in property crimes," said Hardenbrook. "We are planning several operations for the next few weeks that will hopefully make an impact on these property crimes. Many of the offenders that we have been arresting have prior theft convictions."

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The detectives plan to focus on areas that are hit the hardest such as, strip malls, shopping centers, farms and agricultural processing centers. There are many of these areas in the unincorporated areas of the county as well as within the contract cities of Riverbank, Waterford, Patterson and Hughson where the Sheriff's Department provides services.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Tom Letras (209) 652-0134. If you are interested in booking photos and sentences of persons arrested and convicted for these crimes, they can be provided to you.

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