

Home burglaries up from last year

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The number of home burglaries continues to rise in Temple compared to past years, with figures in 2013 exceeding the numbers recorded over the same time period in 2012.

Information provided by Temple Police showed 142 home burglaries reported through April 1. Only 88 had been reported for the same time period in 2012.

As of April 1, Temple Police had arrested four individuals for burglary, spokesman Cpl. Christopher Wilcox said. By April 1, 2012, police had arrested seven individuals in six burglary cases, he said, adding that the figures included both building and home burglaries.

Wilcox stressed that all numbers are only tentative and may change after being reviewed, reclassified or reassigned.

Getting inside a burglar's mind

SimpliSafe, a business that sells home safety systems, talked to numerous convicted burglars and came up with a description of what "Bob, your local burglar" does once he's inside a home.

■ Bob will go straight to the master bedroom to look for cash, jewelry or anything valuable because people usually leave money or jewelry in the most common areas. He'll also look under the bed and in closets.

■ Bob will check the kitchen and living room for electronics, credit cards, car keys and

AT A GLANCE

HOME BURGLARIES

Temple's home burglaries in 2013 have increased over the figures reported for 2012.

- 2013 – 142 burglaries
- Arrests – 4 offenders for 3 cases
- 2012 – 88 burglaries
- Arrests – 7 offenders for 6 cases

personal information.

■ Bob then calls his backup driver after gathering all he took so he can load the goods into the car or van. Then they drive away to the next target. It usually takes Bob about eight to 12 minutes to get in and out of a home.

Gold jewelry has been taken in some of the burglaries because gold in any form is valuable, Wilcox said.

Amy Cohorn, an employee at EZ Pawn, 24 S. First, said those trying to sell items must show an original state-issued ID. Their computer system notes if they have brought in stolen merchandise before, so the pawn shop will not buy anything from them after that.

People must first file a police report for stolen items, she said.

Mike Kiger, owner of Mike's Gold Buyers, 3411 Market Loop, discussed the process used when buying jewelry.

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Burglaries

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Kiger said the item is tested to verify it is gold or silver, a price is agreed upon and identification is checked. Their business writes checks to the seller so a paper trail is kept, plus they record the person's ID, the jewelry and the issued check.

Although Temple's ordinance requires businesses to hold items for 48 hours, Kiger said his businesses hold it for anywhere from 72 hours to two weeks so if the item was stolen, that can be determined.

"We don't want to buy stolen goods and we won't buy from people with no legitimate form of identification," he said.

Leland Kjelland, owner of Mid-City Pawn at 10 N. Second St. for 49 years, said the law requires a person trying to pawn an item to have some form of valid identification, such as a driver's license, military ID or a green card. The description or photo on the ID must match the person standing before him. He logs information, including a description of the item being pawned, into the computer system.

Kjelland holds items for 21

days before he disposes of it, he said. If someone pawns an item, he holds it for one month plus 60 days, even though the law changed a few years ago to one month plus 30 days. He said that is the way he always operated his business and it gives people more time to return for the item if they want it back.

Police go to an online database called Leads Online, where pawn shops enter information, he said. The police enter the description of a stolen item and the computer searches the database for any matches.

Kjelland said 90 percent of stolen jewelry is sold to gold buyers who set up shop at area hotels, not to pawn shops, because gold buyers come into town and leave. In that case, the jewelry is probably gone forever, he said.

A common problem among people who come into the shop to see if a stolen item is there is they can't describe the item in enough detail. If they have a photo or know the size and cut of the stones involved, that gives the pawnshop owner something to work with, Kjelland said.

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