

Wave of Burglaries Hits West Los Angeles

The former head of Paramount Pictures, Sherry Lansing, and her husband, director William Friedkin, filed a lawsuit last week against the security company ADT after a December break in at their home. The suite alleges that the company promised twenty-four hour a day patrols, and in the event of a break in, a response time of several minutes and a call to the LAPD, but was negligent in handling her burglary. It took almost two hours for an ADT patrolman to reach their home after a December burglary, and reportedly his investigation found no evidence of a break in, despite the fact that their housekeeper arrived the next morning to find the alarm blaring, a stepladder to their second-floor balcony, broken glass, and overturned furniture.

The west side of Los Angeles has experienced a wave of burglaries in the past year, with over 70 thefts. The crimes have been concentrated in Bel Air, Holmby Hills, Pacific Palisades and Brentwood, but also extend to Beverly Hills, Hollywood and Encino with over \$7 million in jewelry, artwork, rare books, and cash stolen. \$500,000 in cash and jewelry was reportedly stolen from the home of LA Clippers guard Cuttino Mobley, and a safe was taken from the Hollywood home of John Taylor from Duran Duran, and singers Faith Hill and Tom McGraw.

The wave is part of larger burglary trend over the past four years across the city, which the Los Angeles Police Department estimates over \$20 million in valuables have been stolen. The hilly enclaves draw the very wealthy looking for privacy, and the residents are often out of town. Many of the homes are not visible from the street and feature security walls and dense plantings, making it difficult to see a prowler. Many residents also forget to turn their alarm system on, and are frequently out of town.

Surveillance footage from an Encino break in showed the faces of two men believed to be behind the thefts, but police have no leads. The burglars appear to be professionals, as no fingerprints or items that could be tested for DNA have recovered.

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