



PHARMACY THEFT AND ROBBERY

PREVENTION

DEA St. Louis Division

Tactical Diversion Squad

TFO Frank Magel

INTRODUCTION



DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Task Force Officer Frank Magel

In the 2013 National Drug Threat Assessment, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration reported:

“The trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs continue to constitute a dynamic and challenging threat to the United States. Controlled prescription drug (CPD) abuse continues to be the nation’s fastest growing drug problem. Rates of CPD abuse remain high, with individuals abusing CPDs at a higher prevalence rate than any illicit drug except marijuana. Pain relievers are the most common type of CPDs taken illicitly and are the CPDs most commonly involved in overdose incidents.”

THEFT, ROBBERY, BURGLARY

What's the difference?

■ *THEFT*

When someone is allowed in an area and steals items in that area. (employees, customers)

■ *BURGLARY*

When someone is not authorized in an area and steals items in that area. This pertains to marked offices / areas also.

■ *ROBBERY*

Stealing by use of force or threat of use of force.

Last month, Tampa police reported the broad daylight theft of medication from a man who was walking out of the Medicine Shop Pharmacy on North Nebraska Avenue by a robber who shocked the victim with a stun gun. The man made his getaway in a car driven by a young woman. The victim was not seriously injured.

In September, a gunman walked into the Palm Plaza Pharmacy on South Dale Mabry Highway. Armed with a small revolver, the man jumped over a counter. Holding a clerk by the back of the neck and pointing the gun at his head, the robber forced the clerk into a back office. A surveillance camera showed the gunman shoving the clerk toward a safe and forcing him to open it before the victim was pushed to the floor. The robber then removed medications, the clerk's wallet and a cell phone, along with cash.

In July, a man was accused of stealing 1,500 prescription pills from a CVS pharmacy in Clearwater. The man was charged with robbery and trafficking in Oxycontin. (Ten bottles of Oxycontin is worth about \$10,000 on the street, police say.) He showed the pharmacist a list of pills he wanted and said she had one minute to hand them over.

In May 2012, St. Petersburg police arrested a man in the armed robbery of a CVS pharmacy in which drugs were stolen. The suspect was arrested and charged with possession of Xanax and another controlled substance.

In November 2010, two men robbed a CVS pharmacy in Tampa Palms as part of a crime spree that included multiple carjackings. The robbers stole pain pills from the pharmacy and later were arrested.

What do they want?

Opiates and Benzos

Opana

Oxycodone

Methadone

Percocet

Xanax

Valium

Characteristics of a Pharmacy Robber

- Majority are white males
- 20 to mid 30's
- Majority are note passers
- Occurs within 45 seconds to 60 seconds.
- Wearing hats, sunglasses, concealing face.
- Small group of individuals











WHY DO THEY DO IT?

- ADDICTION
- EASY TO GET RID OF
- VALUABLE ON THE STREET
- HARD TO DETECT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

What if I am Robbed?

- Comply

Your safety and other employees is #1.

- Look for and recall specifics of robber
- Try to keep note if possible.
- BE A GOOD WITNESS

THINGS TO NOTICE

- RACE
- HEIGHT
- WEIGHT
- DEFORMATIES
- PIERCINGS
- TATTOOS
- HAIR
- CLOTHES (Emblems, etc)
- SKIN (scars etc.)
- SHOES
- LEFT HANDED?

What Should I do After the Robbery?

Call 911

Lock the store

Secure scene for

Fingerprints (Don't touch anything)

Secure note or other items.



Robbery Prevention

- Thieves will look for a weakness in people, security and set up.

Install height markers at doors and back by pharmacy.

Physical set up of pharmacy (imagine if banks had cash on display)

Auto close door with buzzer

Good camera system.

Good camera placement (front door, parking lot, around store, AT PHARMACY COUNTER.)

Keep employees alert and greeting customers.

Use signs to identify restricted areas.

6½ 6½

6 6

5½ 5½

5 5

4½ 4½



**RESTRICTED
— AREA —**

**AUTHORIZED
PERSONNEL
ONLY**



SECURITY NOTICE

**THIS PROPERTY IS
PROTECTED BY
ELECTRONIC
SURVEILLANCE**



Limit access to narcotics.

Regularly inventory C II and C III
narcotics (Lortab).

Criminal background checks for all
pharmacy staff.

Awareness

Maintain inventory of controlled substances.

Monitor staff for changes in behavior, mood, etc.

Contact law enforcement if theft/burglary is suspected. Provide a detailed description of what was stolen.

Positively identify and record the identity of non pharmacy personnel who enter areas where controlled substances are kept.

Ensure lighting is adequate during business hours and after closing.

SOMETIMES

IT JUST DOESN'T WORK
OUT FOR THEM

REMEMBER

NO MERCHANDISE IS WORTH DYING FOR



THANK YOU

TFO FRANK MAGEL
Tactical Diversion Squad
St. Louis Division
Desk: 314-538-4884