

The CAO Weekly Report

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Monterey County Administrative Office

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District Attorney Selects Investigator of the Year



District Attorney Investigator (DAI) Jorge Ramirez has been selected as the Monterey County District Attorney's Investigator of the Year for 2013. In announcing this recognition for Ramirez, District Attorney Dean Flippo made note of the investigator's ability to handle everything thrown his way.

“During 2013, DAI Ramirez's caseload consisted of more than 50 active major felony cases including homicides, attempted homicides, sexual assaults, officer-involved shootings and identity theft,” says

Flippo. “He understands that attention to detail is critical to ensure that the truth is found. He is tenacious in his pursuit of the truth and is able to take complex cases that contain convoluted facts and organize and explain them in a manner that makes sense and can be presented in court.”

Jorge Ramirez has been a peace officer for 17 years, achieving the rank of detective sergeant while with the Hollister Police Department. He began working in the District Attorney's Office in 2011.

"I worked several assignments during the course of my career prior to coming to the DA's office and found investigations to be the most challenging and rewarding," says Ramirez, who has attended the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Institute of Criminal Investigations (ICI) with a specialty in Sexual Assault Investigation and holds a Master's Degree in Administration of Justice. "Every case is important and brings its unique challenges. Fortunately, I am surrounded by a fantastic support staff, a talented group of investigators, and of course, gifted attorneys who put it all together in court."

Most recently, Ramirez played a key role in bringing a conviction in a 30-year old 'cold case,' People vs. Ubaldo Sanchez. Ramirez, working with the Monterey County Sheriff's Office, was instrumental in bringing all the witnesses together.

"My role was to help with all of the Spanish-speaking witnesses," explains Ramirez. "I was tasked with maintaining open communications and providing a familiar face, in their native language, to make the process of testifying much less intimidating. Being thrust into the middle of a murder case can be intimidating for any witness, more so for those who do not speak English."

Investigator Ramirez says he is humbled to have received the Investigator of the Year award. Ramirez will be officially recognized at the Annual Monterey County Peace Officers Association Awards Dinner next month.



Scam Alert from the Sheriff's Department

Here is a warning from the Sheriff's Department about a rise in the number of telephone scam artists.

Crime Prevention experts say they are hearing from an increasing number of residents about receiving threatening and often intimidating phone calls on both home and cell phones. The callers demand fine payments or the person receiving the call will go to jail. According to those who have received calls, the caller suggests he/she is an attorney and that failure to pay will result in a warrant for arrest.



Don't be fooled says Crime Prevention Specialist Dave Crozier.

“This is just one of many ways scam artists scare you into sending money,” says Crozier. “Scammers are constantly coming up with new ways to scam and there are countless ways they can try to draw you in.”

Crozier says we should be suspicious of receiving this type of call particularly since law enforcement, financial institutions and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for example generally correspond by mail.

Typical phone scams involve a caller saying you have won money but must send money to receive the prize, or that a relative was robbed in a foreign country and needs money to return to the United States. It is not uncommon for scammers to call back multiple times.

The IRS has issued warnings of scammers claiming to be one of its employees and demanding money. It is also possible callers are obtaining personal information from **Facebook** or other social networking programs.

If you have had the unfortunate experience of being the victim of a scam artist, Crozier recommends making an entry on a scam report site such as www.ripoffreport.com to warn others of cons, scams, and other unfair business practices.

If you'd like more information about scam protection, contact Crime Prevention Specialist Dave Crozier at 759-6675.

Tips to Avoid Becoming a Scam Victim:

- **Never divulge personal information unless you initiated the phone call.** A person calling from your financial institution for example would never need to ask for information.
- Never send cash, checks or money orders, just because you are instructed to do so.
- **Don't give in to fear!** Don't give in to intimidating demands for money.
- **Limit the personal information on your social networking site.** Criminals will use it for many types of scams via email and phone, as well as, to create an identity to conduct illicit activities.
- If approached, do an online search of the company or person's name with the word 'scam' after it. It may bring up stories of other people who have been duped by the same scam.
- **Report scams to the National Fraud Information Center.** To file a complaint with the NFIC, visit the Fraud.org site.
- Search the internet by entering **stop scams** or **phone scams**. Two good sites are: <http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud> (FBI) and the consumer fraud site at http://www.consumerfraudreporting.org/defend_yourself.php
- **Report the scam to your local law enforcement.**



New Year Reminders from County Benefit Team

With the New Year comes recommendations from our County Benefit Team. Here are some first of the year suggestions to make sure your benefits are working for you.

Beneficiary Designations

These designations should be reviewed and updated each year. This includes life insurance, PERS retirement and 457 Deferred Compensation as well as some voluntary optional benefits/policies such as AFLAC and old EBS policies. This ensures that those you have designated to receive your money will do so in the event of your passing. These designations reduce stress on loved ones and can assist with final expenses.

Health Plans

If you changed health plans during Open Enrollment, be sure to provide your doctors and pharmacy with a copy of your new health plan identification card for timely billing. Also, if you are using the mail order program for prescriptions, be sure to contact that provider as well.

Eligibility Check

Is it time for a dental or eye exam? Be sure to check your eligibility. You can find a preferred provider facility or obtain pre-authorization for services by contacting:

Dental

Pacific Health Alliance
1800-533-4742 or email mail4pha@aol.com

Vision

Vision Service Plan
1-800-877-7195 or visit their website at: www.vsp.com

