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SFPD Safety Tips for Lunar New Year Festivities 18-022

February 08, 2018 | 1:10 PM

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Gung Hay Fat Choy!

The 2018 San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade will be held on Saturday, February 24, 2018. The parade, begun in the 1860's as a means to educate the community about Chinese culture, is the largest such lunar year celebration in the country and one of San Francisco's most popular and well-attended events.

With huge crowds expected, including guests from all over the world, public safety is the San Francisco Police Department's number one priority. There will be a significant police presence during Lunar New Year activities, with both uniformed and plainclothes officers on duty to monitor public events. As with any large event, safety is everyone's responsibility, including participants, organizers, security staff and law enforcement.

Lunar New Year celebrants can help avoid becoming a victim of a crime by keeping in mind the following safety tips:

- The festivities are about celebrating community. Look out for each other and report any suspicious persons or activity to event staff or a police officer. A good adage is, "If you see something, say something." In an emergency, call 9-1-1. To provide an anonymous tip, call the SFPD Anonymous Tip Line at (415) 575- 4444.
- Stay informed by signing up for emergency text message alerts by texting the word AlertSF to 888-777. AlertSF allows us to notify you of emergencies in San Francisco.
- Keep your friends close and your drinks closer. Don't accept drinks from strangers. Drink responsibly and don't drink and drive- always use a designated driver.
- The San Francisco Bay Area has a host of public transit options that will get you to, from and around Lunar New Year events.
- If you drive to the festivities, remember to "Park Smart!" Take your valuables with you, don't leave them inside your car.
- Maintain possession of your cell phone, wallet and other valuables.
- There is safety in numbers. Stay with a group when on the street or leaving bars and clubs. Be cautious about leaving a bar or club with a stranger. A rule of thumb is that if you feel "unsure" about someone, rely on that instinct and do not go with that person.

San Francisco Police also urge all members of the Chinese community to be suspicious of strangers claiming to provide relief from a curse or illness or those who provide "purification" ceremonies in which cash and valuable items must be offered as part of the process.

Please review the video below on various ways to identify potential scammers, how to protect yourself from a scam, and reporting resources available to scam victims.

Link to PSA video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EDXcgatzxQ&feature=youtu.be

Anyone who is confronted by scammers or anyone who knows of an elder who was approached by scammers is strongly advised to contact police. Reports can be made at any SFPD District Station or by calling Dispatch at (415) 553-0123 and requesting an officer to take a report.

Cantonese speakers can leave tips on a special tip line by calling (415) 553-9212 or 1-855-737-3847.

Information can also be called into the Anonymous Tip Line at (415) 575-4444 or via Text a Tip by texting a message to TIP411 and beginning the message with SFPD.

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