

The Virgin Islands Consortium

VIPD To Residents: Be Safe And 'Don't Let Violence Stop The Carnival'

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ST. THOMAS -- St. Thomas Police Chief Daren Foy and Deputy Chief Eugene Alcendor, through a press release issued on Monday, urged residents to be vigilant and pay attention to suspicious individuals who use the carnival season to target victims who may be distracted by the many events taking place. The chiefs said while it's a time to be festive, residents and visitors alike should nonetheless be aware of their surroundings and "don't let violence stop carnival!" reads the release.

It adds that V.I.P.D. officers will be on location in full force to support the general public to include the territory's residents and visiting tourists.

The force also made available the following safety tips:

- 1) If during an event you see a situation brewing such as a fight or a heated argument, contact a law enforcement officer immediately.
- 2) If you see someone with a weapon; such as a gun, knife, stick, bottle, or any item that can be used as a weapon, notify a law enforcement officer immediately.
- 3) Travel in groups and stay in well lit areas and do not trust anyone that you don't know. Also do not wonder off in dark alleys, roadways, etc.
- 4) Make sure to park in properly lit areas and observe your surroundings as you leave any establishment and enter your car.
- 5) Do not leave purchased items visible in your transport, such items should be placed in a vehicle's trunk.
- 6) Make sure purses and wallets are secure on your person and you are aware of their location at all times.
- 7) Keep the amount of available cash you have at a minimum or separate it into different pockets or locations on or about your person. This way all of it is not lost if your purse or wallet is misplaced or stolen.
- 8) Minors and any child under the age of 18 shall not be on the public street after 10 p.m. without a consenting adult.
- 9) Credit cards offer convenience and security, however, keep track of all cards and keep receipts to compare to your monthly statement.
- 10) Remain aware of your surroundings at all times and move with confidence and purpose. Have keys ready before getting to your car so you do not have to search for them while standing near it.
- 11) Lock your doors and windows when leaving the house. Leave a light on outside, notify your neighbor that you will be away from the house for a specific time.
- 12) Report suspicious people or activity to law enforcement immediately.
- 13) Do not drink and drive. Always have a designated driver in your group when you go to the various events.
- 14) Most importantly, reduce your own vulnerability and do what you can to minimize the possibility that you could be a victim of a crime or accidental loss.

"Carnival is truly a time for festive celebration; and also a time for extra caution. Drinking and driving, or driving without using seat belts are unacceptable behaviors. We wish everyone a safe and happy carnival. Let us all strive to make Carnival 2016 accident free and continue to practice the basic principles of safety throughout the year," the release concludes.