

Police Brace for Spread of ‘Smash-and-Grab’ Robberies Across Heartland

The recent rise of “smash-and-grab” robberies in California appears to be spreading across the country.

Upscale department stores in and around Los Angeles and San Francisco during the past week were victims of incidents in which mobs of looters broke windows, beat and pepper-sprayed employees, and stole hundreds of thousands of dollars in goods.

Now, after several years of progressives demanding that cities defund the police, it appears the “smash-and-grab” trend is extending to other areas of the country as Black Friday begins the holiday shopping season. WBNS in Columbus, Ohio, reported that local law enforcement agencies were remaining vigilant to protect local business owners.

Some area businesses were preparing so they don’t become the next victim.

“We’re not concerned about the holsters or the t-shirts, we are concerned about the firearms. That will have a direct impact on others if they were to be stolen from the store. That’s something we are going to do everything in our power to prevent,” LEPD owner Eric Delbert said.

“It’s the atmosphere of our culture right now, the violence in the streets.”

In Western New York, police arrested three individuals after a string of “smash-and-grab” robberies, Rochester’s WHAM reported. The three people were the same suspects involved in a string of about 20 burglaries in 2020.

“We reached out to parole and found the people involved in that investigation were out of jail and this was very much the same identical thing as a year ago,” said Livingston Chief Deputy Dan Rittenhouse.

In Orono, Minnesota, police issued a statement saying there had been a few incidents of “smash-and-grab” crimes involving vehicles.

“This is typically a crime of opportunity which occurs in just a few minutes, and valuable items are quickly taken with damage left behind,” the Orono Police Department statement said.

In Fargo, North Dakota, police officers responded to four reports of “smash-and-grab” thefts within two hours Saturday evening, KVRN reported.

The Daily Mail reported that organized crime syndicates were paying thieves in California as little as \$500 to swipe items worth thousands, a law enforcement official said.

“We’re not talking about someone who needs money or needs food. These are people who go out and do this for high profit, and for the thrill,” Ben Dugan, president of the Coalition of Law Enforcement and Retail, told the Daily Mail.

“Fact is, with police overwhelmed, woke prosecutors refusing to make such crimes a priority and criminal penalties heavily reduced, looters (and the crime rings they work for) often face little or no consequences,” the New York Post editorial board said. “Organized retail robbery has become a rational career choice.”

Progressive lawmakers and judges unwilling to support law enforcement has had an effect on police officers.

“Why should a police officer waste time getting into an altercation when the person is not going to jail?” Pete Eliadis, a former law enforcement official and founder of Intelligence Consulting Partners, told the Post.

Two Los Angeles-area Nordstroms were robbed this week, with the first incident involving at least 20 people doing the looting.

In Walnut Creek, California, near San Francisco, a mob of 80 stormed a Nordstrom on Saturday, attacking employees and grabbing merchandise by the armful. A day earlier, a mob hit San Francisco’s Union Square, targeting 10 retailers.

Three carloads of people last week robbed a Neiman Marcus on Chicago’s Magnificent Mile, a shopping district that has seen skyrocketing theft, CBS Chicago reported.

Source:

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