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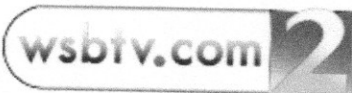


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Posted: 8:13 p.m. Friday, Nov. 23, 2012

Gwinnett CID helps with extra security for shoppers

By Kerry Kavanaugh

DULUTH, Ga. — Black Friday shoppers might notice some extra security patrols as they continue with their holiday shopping.

Channel 2's Kerry Kavanaugh talked to community leaders in Duluth where they say the presence pays off.

The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District has increased security around the holidays for the past three years.

They focus on shopping plazas watching out for customers and preventing crimes.

"Over the holidays we focus pretty much on the security of the shoppers," said Sgt. Josh Smith with Gwinnett Place C.I.D. Security.

Kavanaugh watched as Smith talked to a woman as her car stalled in the plaza.

"He's just assisting me to make sure no one hit me from behind so the traffic could keep moving, so I really appreciate it," shopper Pamela Bobb said.

From now through the end of December, the CID has additional security patrols to help out drivers and keep an eye on shoppers so criminals can't add undue stress during the holiday season.

"I think it makes them feel a lot more secure when they can come here and shop, and not get approached by unknown people," Smith said.

"Over the past five years we've had a 35 percent decrease in crime in this area," Joe Allen with the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District told Kavanaugh.

Allen runs the CID. He credits the reduction in crime to the CID working with Gwinnett County police up and down Pleasant Hill Road and Steve Reynolds Boulevard. It's a retail dense area that can be a magnet for crime.

Allen hopes the increased security also increases the comfort for busy shoppers and makes the bad guys think twice.

The Gwinnett County police have also assembled a holiday task force. They plan to blanket busy shopping areas across the county with patrols as well.

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