



# NEWS RELEASE

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**July 31, 2012**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**BPD 2012-16**

## JUVENILES SUSPECTED OF PHONE THEFTS ON SAN FRANCISCO BART TRAINS ARRESTED

**OAKLAND, CA** – BART is seeking help from cell phone owners who fell victim to a specific theft pattern. On July 18, 2012, two juveniles suspected of “grab and go” thefts from unsuspecting customers on BART trains were arrested by San Francisco Police officers (SFPD) and booked by BART Police for robbing a BART passenger. According to the victim and witnesses, the suspects grabbed an iPhone from a BART rider and fled the Balboa Park Station. The victim and two witnesses gave chase, but the thieves used pepper spray on one of the witnesses to escape. A third person saw the thieves running and alerted police to their location. Thanks to the diligence of the three witnesses and the SFPD the two were arrested.

“BART Police would like to thank the good Samaritans for their brave and heroic actions which led to this significant arrest,” BART Police Chief Kenton Rainey said. “We are also grateful for the quick response by San Francisco Police Department officers who pursued and arrested the suspects. We are asking other customers who may have been victimized in a similar manner to let BART investigators know.”

The thieves used a pattern of boarding a train and walking down the aisle searching for a victim, then sitting down in different seats to keep visual contact with one another. Once they found a victim, they signaled each other, grabbed the phone and ran from the station. In their effort to escape the crime scene and intimidate victims, the thieves used pepper spray on anyone who tried to intervene or resist.

BART Police believe cell phones were stolen primarily on trains near the Balboa Park, Glen Park, 16<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Street Stations. BART Police are encouraging anyone who believes they may have been a victim of these thieves to please contact BART’s Investigations Division at (510) 464-7040.

The pair face serious charges: grand theft from a person, assault with less than a deadly weapon, conspiracy to commit a crime, minor in possession of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) (the active ingredient in pepper spray), and OC used in the commission of a crime.

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## SAFETY TIPS

BART Police want to remind customers of the following safety tips to avoid becoming a victim of cell phone or other electronic device theft:

- always be aware of your surroundings,
- avoid the attention of thieves; use your phone discreetly,
- avoid using your phone or electronic device near train doors, during station stops or when exiting the station, and never lend your phone to strangers.

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