



Media Contact: Natasha Ganes
Universal Services of America
714-619-9744 nganes@universalpro.com

Protect Yourself from Stalkers

SANTA ANA, Calif. (January 12, 2009) – Nearly 10 percent of women and two percent of men in the United States have been stalked with an average risk of physical violence incidence of nearly 40% - Rosenfeld, B. "Violence Risk Factors in Stalking and Obsessional Harassment."

Stalkers with a prior intimate relationship are more likely to verbally intimidate and physically harm their victims than strangers, with the potential for violence four times higher than strangers. The strongest risk factors for violence are: 1) threats and intimidation; 2) the existence of prior intimate relationships; and 3) substance abuse. The emotional damage of stalking and threats increases the prevalence of anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression among victims. The incidents of stalking increase during stressful economic environments and is reflected in increases in Cyber-stalking.

Employers can, and have been, held responsible for protecting employees against stalkers and domestic violence, which can be costly in terms of liability and loss of productivity. Companies should establish policies for educating employees and procedures anonymous reporting to protect privacy and safety of victims or potential victims. If someone believes they are being stalked, they should take action, including

- Obtain a private Post Office (P.O. Box) for all mail, including magazine subscriptions and the use the P.O. Box on your driver's license. Do not file a change of address with the U.S. Postal Service, notify friends, utilities and others directly.
- Set-up Google or other search engines alerts for your name to monitor online traffic and remove your personal information availability online such as telephone number, address, etc.
- Sign up for your state's address confidentiality program and obtain an unpublished and unlisted phone number and avoid calling toll-free 800, 866, 888, 877 and 900 number services.
- Don't list your name in an apartment building directory, use a variation for visitors
- Be very protective of your Social Security number and alert the three credit bureaus--Experian, Equifax and Trans Union. Put a fraud alert on your credit reports to avoid fraudulent access.
- Make a police report and keep a log of every stalking incident. Save all communications for evidence. Do not edit or alter them in any way.



- Consider getting professional counseling and/or seeking help from a victims support group.
- If you are a victim of Cyber-stalking, act promptly and firmly to defuse the situation. Take potential threats seriously.
- If you are receiving unwanted contact, make clear to that person that you would like him or her not to contact you again.

About Universal Protection Service

Founded in 1965, Universal Protection Service (UPS) combines an innovative mix of tradition with cutting edge systems and technology to keep pace with the ever-evolving needs of today's business environments. Headquartered in Santa Ana, Calif., with offices located throughout Arizona, California, Colorado and Washington, UPS employs hands-on, highly experienced management teams and continuous training to deliver consistent, high quality security solutions. UPS is a division of **Universal Services of America**, which also includes Universal Building Maintenance, UPS Security Systems and Universal Fire/Life Safety Services (PPO# 14417). Visit our website at: <http://www.universalpro.com>.