

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, January 7, 2011

MPD ANNOUNCES REDUCTION IN HOMICIDES THAT EQUATE TO A 46 YEAR LOW

At the close of 2010, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) announced a reduction in homicides that was a 46-year low. The District finished the year 2010 with 131 homicides, a nine percent decrease from last year. MPD also finished the year with a homicide closure rate of 79 percent, which is well above the national average and an increase over the year before.

"I am thankful for the dedication and hard work of the men and women of the Metropolitan Police Department, and the commitment from our partners in the community and other government agencies, that are helping us to make the city safer," said Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of Police. "I especially want to commend the members of the Homicide Branch for their efforts and the intelligence and patrol units for their increased work."

Many initiatives have contributed to the reduction in homicides and other crimes. MPD continues to reduce violent gun crime by focusing on violent offenders, taking illegal guns off the street, and launching innovative programs such as the Gun Offender Registry and the Firearm Tip Reward Program. In 2010, robberies committed with guns decreased 20 percent and assaults committed with guns were down 10 percent. Since 2007, the Department has taken 10,000 illegal guns off the streets.

The Department has worked to build stronger relationships with community members, with both a physical and virtual presence. The Department has adopted an aggressive deployment of officers on footbeats, bicycles, and Segways. In four years, MPD has gone from just a handful of officers assigned to regular foot patrol, to more than 300 deployed on foot patrol on all three shifts in neighborhoods across the city. Forty Segways are assigned to the police districts, and an additional 20 Segways are used to patrol around schools. In addition, almost 100 officers patrol on mountain bikes every day.

MPD has reinvigorated community email groups to enhance communication with city residents, and to provide a 24-hour a day virtual police presence. Police districts post crime stats and prevention tips daily. Community members communicate with police leaders in the districts and each other about important information to keep their neighborhoods safe. Questions or concerns posted to these are usually answered immediately, often by top command members. The police email group community has grown by 38 percent over the past two years.

The Department's phone tip line and anonymous text message have seen significant growth in usage. In two years, the number of tips received has increased. And many of these tips are valuable: monetary rewards for tips leading to an arrest and indictment have more than doubled.

In addition to a consecutive year of low homicide numbers, the city also experienced a decline in traffic fatalities for the second year in a row. In 2009, the number of traffic fatalities was 33 – the lowest in 25 years. In 2010, there were 25 traffic related deaths.

"We are pleased with the positive results and I am excited about the opportunity to continue to serve the people of this great city," said Chief Lanier.

» Read the complete news release online at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov>

» Join one of the MPD's community online email groups at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/listserv>

» Learn about the MPD's anonymous tip lines at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/tipline>

» The MPD offers rewards for information on homicides, robberies and other serious crimes. Get more information about the MPD's reward programs at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/rewards>

MOTORISTS REMINDED TO TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS WHEN DRIVING ON SNOWY OR ICY STREETS

The weatherman calls for a chance of snow this weekend and the MPD wants you to be prepared. Be it rain or snow, if the temperatures drop below freezing, the streets can quickly get slick, forming a thin sheet of ice on the pavement.

Whenever the weather becomes unpleasant, motorists are advised drive with caution. If it's snowing or icy, stay far back from plows and spreaders so the drivers can see you. Remember that when it rains, sleets or snows, travelling in your vehicle will take longer than usual. Please be patient. Do not race to pass other vehicles, especially working plows or spreaders, as this is dangerous to you, the snow crews, and other motorists. Getting to your final destination safely is the number one priority, so maintain a safe distance between your vehicle and other cars, giving yourself the extra time and space necessary to stop during inclement weather.

In addition, commuters and residents are reminded to:

- Do not drive distracted.
- Listen to media reports for weather updates.
- Remember that driving on ice is significantly different than driving on snow. No cars handle well on ice. Even the tires a four-wheel-drive SUV will skid on ice.
- Drivers should use extreme caution and maintain safe speeds and distances from other vehicles during inclement weather.
- Pay attention to the road conditions, particularly black ice which can be deceptive in its appearance giving the driver a false sense of security on the road.
- Take note of Variable Message Signs placed along local highways and corridors with messages like "Bridge Freezes before Roadway" and/or "Caution — Icy Conditions."
- Black ice is transparent ice located on the roadway making it very difficult to detect and becoming a major hazard to motorists. Warnings like the ones listed above are used to alert motorists where black ice is likely to occur.

Please remain alert and be aware of surrounding conditions including other vehicles and pedestrians.

» The District of Columbia announces information on how the streets will be treated during a snowstorm online. If you hear a weather report and want to see if the city plans to salt the streets or plow, go to:
<http://dc.gov>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

MPD Accepts Cell Phone Donations.

Did you get a new BlackBerry, iPhone, Droid for the holidays? Are you wondering what to do with your old phone? Please consider contributing your old cell phone to someone in need. Phones are collected by Victim Specialists and distributed to clients through our partner agencies. For more information on the cell phone collection program, including a list of donation sites, visit <http://mpdc.dc.gov/donatecellphone>.

Hypothermia Watch Partner Program. The Department of Human Services' Hypothermia Watch Partner Program is designed to prevent hypothermia deaths

among the homeless by providing District citizens with a hotline number they can call to have homeless persons who are outside in freezing temperatures picked up by a van and transported to a local shelter. You can call the shelter hotline at **1 (800) 535-7252**.

Preventing terrorism is everybody's business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the Metropolitan Police Department at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity or behavior that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn more about steps you can take to help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline. The CyberTipline is a Congressionally-mandated

means for reporting crimes against children. Report crimes 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by calling **1-800-843-5678** or reporting crimes online at <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

Support the Washington DC Police Foundation. The Washington DC Police Foundation is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization that brings together the business, civic, and other professional communities to promote public safety by providing financial and in-kind resources to the MPD, expanding public safety awareness, and advancing public safety policy and initiatives. Learn more about the extraordinary support the Washington DC Police Foundation provides to the MPD. Learn more about the Foundation at <http://www.dcpolicefoundation.org>.

DATA BOX

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|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Homicides | as of 1/7/11 |
| 2011: 3 | |
| 2010: 1 | |
| % Change: 200% | |
| Closure Rate: 33.3% (1 closure) | |
| Adult Arrests | week end. 1/1/11 |
| Data Not Available | |
| Juvenile Activity | week end. 1/1/11 |
| Data Not Available | |
| Firearm Recoveries | as of 12/27/10 |
| December: 166 | |
| 2010 Total: 2,213 | |
| Traffic Fatalities | as of 1/7/11 |
| 2011: 0 | |
| 2010: 1 | |
| % Change: -100% | |

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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