

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, September 16, 2011

TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR VALUABLES WHILE AT THE GAS STATION

The MPD would like to raise the public's awareness about a common crime tactic perpetrated by thieves. These thieves target unsuspecting vehicle owners when they are pumping gas or paying the tab in the station. Purses and other valuables, which are often visible or easily accessible from passenger side of a vehicle, are the main targets. To simplify things for the thief, the vehicle is often left unlocked. The thefts normally take place when the victim is most distracted – when he or she is pumping gas or going into the station to pay for a purchase. A suspect vehicle will drive up next to the victim's auto, quickly open the unlocked door, and grab any easily-accessible items. Then they will just as quickly drive off. It happens in a matter of seconds.

These sorts of thefts can be prevented when the appropriate precautions are taken. Below are some helpful tips on how to avoid becoming a victim:

- » Pick stations that are well-lit and have video-surveillance cameras at the pump.
- » Make a list of favorite gas stations along your regular travel routes. Stations near police departments and state police barracks are good choices.
- » Always remove your keys and lock the car doors while you are pumping gas. If you sense danger and you have a panic button on your car keys, keep your hands on the panic button until help arrives.
- » Keep valuables out of sight in your vehicle and lock the doors, even if you are going inside for just a moment.
- » Pick your pump with care. It might be worthwhile to wait for the pump nearest to the attendant or building.
- » Pay attention to your surroundings.
- » Don't be distracted by your cell phone.



» Download posters and palm cards about gas station safety — featuring McGruff the Crime Dog — by visiting:
<http://www.mpd.org/gasstationsafety>

» Watch the video "Preventing Thefts from Auto and Auto Thefts at Gas Stations" at MPD's YouTube channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4r2v3MhU-s>

TAKE PART IN NATIONAL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK SEPTEMBER 18-24

National Seat Check Saturday is part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) 2011 Child Passenger Safety Week (September 18-24). Car seats and booster seats save lives and offer the best protection for children in a crash. Car seats work best when used correctly. Roughly 3 out of 4 child safety seats are not installed properly. The DC Department of Motor Vehicles NHTSA-certified technician installs and inspects more than 500 car seats a year at DMV's Vehicle Inspection Station.



On September 24, 2011, find out which child safety seat is best suited to protect your child. Our Car Seat Event will be held at the Vehicle Inspection Station, 1001 Half Street, SW from 10 am to 2 pm. No appointment is necessary. Make child safety a top priority for your family!

STREET CLOSURE

The H Street Festival This event is scheduled for Saturday, September 17, from 12:00 pm until 7:00 pm. There will be no parking or vehicular traffic on the day of the event beginning at 7:00 am and ending at 10:00 pm on H Street, NE between 8th and 14th Streets, and all connecting intersections except for 15th Street, NE.

Motorists are advised to expect traffic delays near this event. Participants are encouraged to take public transportation. The DC Circulator will run free shuttle service from the Eastern Market Metro Station to the festival, from 11:30 am to 7:30 pm.

» Learn about new NHTSA Child Restraint Guidelines at:
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/ChildSafety/step3>

» Use NHTSA's Child Car Seat Inspection Station Locator to find the car seat inspection station nearest you:
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/cps/cpsfitting/index.cfm>

» Get information on other street closures and traffic reports from DDOT at:
<http://ddot.dc.gov/DC/DDOT/On+Your+Street/Traffic+Management/Live+Traffic+Reports>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

MPD Expands YouTube Channel.

The Metropolitan Police Department's new official YouTube channel has recently launched. The site is a central location for visitors to learn about crime prevention, safety tips, special messages and more. When an investigation may benefit from the public's assistance, detectives will share surveillance video seeking assistance in identifying the alleged perpetrators. Future profiles and interviews with key MPD members are planned to be offered on the site and much more. Currently, the site offers tips on burglary prevention, gas station safety,



boating safety and BUI, DC's curfew law, and more. Check it out at www.youtube.com/OfficialDCPolice.

FBI Launches Child ID App. A new free tool from the Federal Bureau of Investigation is designed to help parents keep a convenient electronic copy of their child's vital information handy on their smart phone. The new app — "Child ID" — is currently available for iPhone with versions in the works for other mobile platforms soon. A child goes missing every 40 seconds in America. Help protect your child with this convenient, free tool.



MPD Celebrates 150 Years. The Metropolitan Police Department turned 150

on August 6. Look for a special decal on most marked vehicles to highlight and celebrate this landmark in the agency's history. In addition, many of our uniformed officers have chosen to honor the sesquicentennial by wearing a commemorative badge through September 30, 2011.



In honor of the milestone, additional information about the Department's history is being added to our website, including the biographies of every Chief of Police since 1861, a history of the badge, and more each week. To see the special section, visit www.mpdcc.gov/150th.

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 9/16/11
2011: 77	
2010: 87	
% Change: -11.5%	
Closure Rate: 90.6% (73 closures)	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 9/12/11
September: 76	
2011 Total: 1,351	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 9/16/11
2011: 27	
2010: 19	
% Change: 42.1%	

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KEVIN PALMER** at kevin.palmer@dc.gov

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