

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, April 12, 2013

APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

Sexual assault is any type of sexual activity that you do not agree to, including inappropriate touching, vaginal, anal, or oral penetration, sexual intercourse that you say no to, rape, attempted rape, and child molestation. Sexual assault can be verbal, visual, or anything that forces a person to join in unwanted sexual contact or attention. It is a reality for everyone. Anyone can be a victim regardless of gender, race, socio-economic status, or religion. Sexual assault victims include infants, elders, deaf and hearing impaired individuals, and members of the LGBT community, minorities, women, men, and disabled persons. No one is exempt. Above all, sexual assault is a crime! In light of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the following tips are just a few risk reducers to being sexually assaulted:

- **Listen to your instincts.** Normal premonition and “gut” feelings are natural indicators that something may be wrong. If you do not feel comfortable with a situation, leave.
- **Be independent.** Most sexual assaults occur between acquaintances or people you already know. You don’t want to be dependent on someone for transportation to and from social outings and if dating someone you don’t need to feel as though you “owe” something because of things done for you during the courtship.
- **Avoid mixing alcohol and drugs with decisions about having sex.** It is difficult to make important choices about sex if you are under the influence.
- **Be aware of date rape drugs.** These drugs are often impossible to smell, taste, or detect in beverages. If you leave your drink alone with someone, do not drink it after you return. You can choose to have a trusted friend watch your drink as well.
- **Consider going with a group** of people if you are meeting someone new.
- **Communicate.** It is important to clearly talk about what each person in a relationship wants to do sexually. However, understand that NO means NO. Communication can be verbal as well as physical.
- **Avoid dating people who...** don’t listen to you, don’t respect your personal space, make you feel guilty, or call you names (i.e., prude or uptight).
- **Be assertive.** Make it clear that you are not going to do anything you don’t want to do and know that your date should stop once you have said or indicated NO.

A victim is never responsible for being sexually assaulted. You are not at fault, the perpetrator is. The aforementioned are risk reducers but know that making a poor choice or failing to use the risk reducers does NOT make it acceptable for anyone to sexual assault you.

» If you have been a victim of a sexual assault, the MPD’s Victim Specialist Unit can provide you some much needed support. Get more information on this unit at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/vsu>

» Get more information about Sexual Assault Awareness Month at the National Sexual Violence Resource Center at:

<http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>

» Some helpful links to local resources include:

- o RAINN: <http://www.rainn.org>
- o DC Rape Crisis Center: <http://www.dcrcc.org>
- o National Center for Victims of Crime: <http://www.ncvc.org>
- o La Clinica Del Pueblo: <http://www.lcdp.org>



AS SPRING ARRIVES, MPD WARNS RESIDENTS TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR CON ARTISTS

While spring means the blooming of the cherry blossoms and other plants, it can also bring out con artists and other criminals seeking to profit from unsuspecting victims. Some of the most common cons and swindles this time of year are bogus home repair offers, fraudulent door-to-door charities, and individuals posing as police officers or bank investigators who claim to be investigating fraudulent tellers or counterfeit schemes. DC residents are urged to be wary of any “something-for-nothing” offers. Always ask for offers in writing, read over all contracts before you sign, and never agree to “cash-only” deals. Do not hesitate to check the credentials of anyone who comes to your door. Ask to see official identification and inspect it carefully. Legitimate organizations – especially real police officers – will not hesitate to comply. And if you have been victimized by a con artist, please call the police and report it. This is the only way that law enforcement can detect patterns and identify and apprehend offenders.

» For more information about con games and swindles, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/scams>

RESIDENTS REMINDED TO OPERATE MINIBIKES AND OTHER SMALL VEHICLES RESPONSIBLY

Like cars and trucks, motorcycles, motorized bicycles, Segways, and mopeds must be operated safely on city streets. Minibikes, ATVs, and dirt bikes are designed for off-road use and may not be driven on city streets or sidewalks.

It is illegal to ride or operate a minibike, dirt bike or All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) on the District’s streets or sidewalks. It is okay to ride bicycles, mopeds, motorized bicycles, Segways, and motorcycles on the street, but not on city sidewalks.*

No matter what or where you ride, obey traffic and safety laws and yield to pedestrians. And don’t forget to wear a helmet for your own protection!

» Get more information on regulations on operating small motorized vehicles in the District of Columbia, as well as helpful posters and fliers online at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/minibike>

Vehicles That Are Legal On DC Streets (not sidewalks)*	Vehicles That Are Illegal On DC Streets or Sidewalks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motorcycle• Moped• Bicycle (<i>Motorized or Non-Motorized</i>)• Segway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)• Minibike• Dirt Bike

* *Non-motorized bicycles may be ridden on the sidewalk in neighborhoods outside the central business district.*

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Street Closures. The MPD wishes to advise the public that multiple events are scheduled to be held on Saturday, April 13,

and Sunday, April 14, including the Japanese Street Festival on portions of Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, on Saturday; the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade along Constitution Avenue, NW, on Saturday; Justin’s Café Block Party near Nationals Baseball Stadium on

Saturday; and the Race to Stop the Silence 8K, which begins at Freedom Plaza on Sunday morning. For more information, read the MPD’s news release issued on 4/5 at <http://mpdc.dc.gov>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

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

Would you like *What’s New in the MPD* emailed to you each week?

Register with DC.Gov at <http://dc.gov/DC/Subscribe/Email+Alerts>

LEARN MORE AT
mpdc.dc.gov