

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, January 1, 2016

HOLIDAY REMINDER: DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE IN DC

Metropolitan Police officers are out in force this holiday season, looking for impaired drivers, speeders and other aggressive or unsafe drivers. Several sobriety checkpoints will be conducted between now and New Year's Day, as part of the MPD's holiday traffic safety detail. The MPD is also throwing its support behind both the designated driver and SoberRide programs this holiday season. Sponsored by the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), SoberRide provides holiday revelers with free cab rides home (up to \$50) every evening from 10 pm to 6 am, now through January 1. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$30 fare), please call 800-200-8294 (TAXI). AT&T customers may dial #WRAP from their wireless phones. Please refer to the SoberRide information listed below for important details concerning this program. You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service

The MPD reminds motorists that DC has tough drunk driving laws, including a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) standard of .08, zero tolerance for youthful offenders, and penalties that include stiff fines, license revocation and the possibility of jail time, even for first offenders.

» Learn more about drunk driving laws in DC by going to:

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

» More details on SoberRide are available at:

<http://www.wrap.org/soberride/>

DCHR RECOGNIZES MPD'S VICTIM SERVICES BRANCH AS EVERYDAY HEROES DURING CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK

Customer Service Week is an international celebration of the importance of customer service and of the people who serve and support customers on a daily basis. In 1992 the U.S. Congress proclaimed Customer Service Week a nationally recognized event, celebrated annually during the first full week in October. This year's theme was Everyday Heroes. The theme recognizes that every day, frontline customer service professionals are heroes.

On October 5, 2015, MPD's Victim Services Branch was chosen by the District of Columbia Human Resources Department as unsung heroes for the supportive services provided by the staff to empower victims of violent crimes. In September alone, the Branch provided customer services to over 1,700 clients.



» For more information on the Victim Services Branch visit

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/victim-assistance>

Pictured from left to right: Dawn Christie (Victim Specialist), Carla Okonkwo (Supervisor-Family Liaison Specialists Unit), Kayce Simmons (Victim Specialist), Megan Riley (Victim Specialist), Tramaine Newsome (Supervisor), Beyshinah Woods (Victim Specialist), Helen Hall (Victim Specialist), Marlene Castro (Victim Specialist), and Tyria Fields (Director). Jordan Spalding (intern) not pictured.

DC LAUNCHES UNDERAGE MARIJUANA USE PREVENTION INITIATIVE

In mid-December, the District of Columbia Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and the Department of Health (DOH) announced the launch of a joint underage marijuana use prevention initiative. The Blunt Truth educates residents about the health implications of marijuana use and provides information about prevention and treatment. The campaign also reinforces that marijuana use and possession are illegal for individuals under 21 years of age.



“There are many myths when it comes to marijuana use and its effects on physical and mental wellness. It’s critical that everyone understand the facts about marijuana consumption,” said Dr. Tanya A. Royster, DBH Director and Dr. LaQuandra S. Nesbitt, DOH Director in a joint statement. “We’ve put together resources for parents and caregivers to have conversations aimed at preventing underage marijuana use and to get help or treatment as needed.”

Research shows that marijuana use can lead to increased anxiety, panic attacks, depression, and other mental health problems. Plus, alarmingly, young people ages 12 to 17 who smoke marijuana weekly are three times more likely than non-users to have thoughts about committing suicide. While some consider marijuana to be a “non-addictive” drug, studies have shown that frequent use can lead to dependency.

An interactive website includes information debunking the myths about marijuana as well as materials discussing the effects of marijuana use, the law in the District and where to find resources. Parents can download the materials directly from the website.

The campaign will be visible across the District throughout the winter and spring with advertisements on metro, online, newspapers and radio. District youth, parents and caregivers can access the campaign through social media, using @DrugFreeYouthDC to find the campaign on Facebook or follow the campaign on Twitter.

» Drug Free Youth DC is the go-to source for resources on drug-free living close to home. If you are a young person, parent, or caregiver in DC and want more information, go to: <http://drugfreeyouthdc.com/>

» Debunk the myths about marijuana at: <http://thebluntruthdc.com>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

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

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service – positive or negative –

through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

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>.

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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