

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, January 22, 2016

GET TIPS ON PREVENTING VEHICLE THEFT DURING THE 2016 WASHINGTON AUTO SHOW

Visitors to the 2016 Washington Auto Show will be able to do more than just check out the latest in new automobiles and accessories. They can also get valuable information and resources on how to protect their vehicles from theft. The safety tips are courtesy of the MPD. The Washington Auto Show was set to run from Friday, January 22, through Sunday, January 31, in the Washington Convention Center. However, because of the snow emergency, the event will not be open to the public until Monday, January 25, at noon. Members of the MPD's Auto Theft Unit and the Washington Area Vehicle Enforcement (WAVE) team, as well as other area law enforcement agencies will be passing out safety tips and information on how to reduce the chances of your vehicle being stolen.

In 2015, 2,827 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, according to preliminary statistics, a 10 percent decrease from the previous year. To help protect automobiles from theft, motorists are encouraged to follow some steps to make your car – and the valuables in it – less attractive to thieves. The common-sense approach to protection is the simplest and most cost effective way to avoid would-be thieves. You should always secure your vehicle, even if you're parking for "just a minute." Do this by:

- Removing your keys from the ignition.
- Locking all of your doors.
- Closing all of your windows.
- Parking in a well-lit area.
- Never leaving your engine running and vehicle unlocked while you run into your home, a convenience store or anywhere else.

Also, a visible or audible device will alert thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular devices include audible alarms, steering wheel locks, steering column collars, theft deterrent decals, and tire locks.

HYPOTHERMIA SEASON RUNS THROUGH MARCH 31

The weather forecasters say it might get cold enough for snow on Sunday night. As the temperature drops, the concern for hypothermia increases. Hypothermia is a condition in which a person's temperature drops below what is required for normal metabolism and bodily functions.

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. For more information, call the shelter hotline 1 (800) 535-7252.

The hypothermia season runs through March 31. The Emergency Management Agency issues Hypothermia Alerts when the temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below, or when the wind chill factor creates the same effect. The hours of operation for the hypothermia alert are 7pm to 7am, but will be extended until the temperature or wind chill factor rises above 32 degrees.

» For more auto theft prevention and other safety tips, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

» Get more information about the 2016 Washington Auto Show at: <https://www.washingtonautoshow.com/>

Those who do not come in from the cold when hypothermia alerts are issued put themselves in life-threatening positions. The body enters into a hypothermia state when its temperature is below 95 degrees.

Signs and Symptoms

Hypothermia usually comes on gradually. As the body temperature of a cold-exposed person decreases, impaired consciousness, confusion, or disorientation may occur. Often, people aren't aware that they need medical attention. Common signs to look for are uncontrollable shivering, which is your body's attempt to generate heat through muscle activity, and the "-umbles" — stumbles, mumbles, fumbles and grumbles.

These behaviors may be a result of changes in consciousness and motor coordination caused by hypothermia. Other signs and symptoms may include:

- Slurred speech
- Abnormally slow rate of breathing
- Cold, pale skin
- Fatigue, lethargy or apathy

Seek immediate medical care for any person who has been exposed to cold air or water and who is shivering, appears disoriented, and shows a lack of coordination, has cold and pale skin, appears tired, and is slurring speech. Try to keep the person warm and dry, preferably indoors or at least out of the wind, until help arrives.

Risk factors

Being in extreme cold, wearing wet clothes — especially in the presence of wind — and being in cold water can all play a part in increasing your chances of hypothermia. People who are elderly, very young, mentally impaired, intoxicated or who have certain health issues are especially vulnerable. In addition, a variety of medications, principally sedative-hypnotics, may predispose users to hypothermia; ethanol and neuroleptic medications particularly increase susceptibility to cold.

Prevention

Avoid alcohol consumption and the use of illegal substances, because these may increase your risk of hypothermia. Before you or your children step out into cold air, remember the advice that follows with the simple acronym COLD:

- **C for cover.** Wear a hat or other protective covering to prevent body heat from escaping from your head, face and neck. Cover your hands with mittens instead of gloves. Mittens are more effective than gloves because mittens keep your fingers in closer contact with one another.
- **O for overexertion.** Avoid activities that would cause you to sweat a lot. The combination of wet clothing and cold weather can give you chills.
- **L for layers.** Wear loose fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Outer clothing made of tightly woven, water-repellent material is best for wind protection. Wool, silk or polypropylene inner layers hold more body heat than cotton does.
- **D for dry.** Stay as dry as possible. In the winter, pay special attention to places where snow can enter, such as in loose mittens or snow boots.

» For more information on the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and ways to prevent hypothermia, visit the Department of Human Services Website at: <http://dhs.dc.gov/>

» The Department of Human Services' Hypoothermia deaths among the homeless. For more information, call the shelter hotline at: (800) 535-7252

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