

# WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



*Friday, April 1, 2011*

## 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>

## SECURE YOUR BICYCLE TO REDUCE THE RISK OF THEFT

Bicycling is a great form of exercise and it helps reduce pollution. It's fun for both adults and children. Weather you use a bicycle to get to and from school, for your daily work commute, or for exercise, it is important that you always secure it when it's not being used. In an effort to prevent thefts and to aid in the recovery of stolen bicycles, the MPD offers the following simple suggestions.

- Invest in a quality lock and use it whenever you are not riding the bicycle.
- Lock your bicycle in an area that is well-lit.
- If you are not going to use your bicycle for a significant period of time, locate a place (preferably inside) where you can safely secure it.
- Document the following information about your bicycle: make, size and serial number. Store this information in a safe place. The serial number is found underneath the bicycle between the crank arms and the bottom bracket. Keep all receipts for your bicycle, including the purchase receipt and repair receipts; these will help provide proof of ownership if your bicycle is stolen.
- Register your bicycle with the National Bike Registry.

While bicycle registration is no longer required in the District of Columbia, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the MPD strongly encourage residents to register their bicycles with the National Bicycle Registry (NBR). NBR is a service that allows you to register your bicycle by serial number in a national database. If your bike is ever stolen, it can be identified and you can prove ownership. Law enforcement anywhere can access this database. NBR also guarantees your registration. If your bike is stolen and not recovered by police within six months, NBR will register your next bike for free and the stolen bike information will remain in the database until the bike is recovered no matter how long it takes.

» Read the MPD's frequently asked questions on registering your bike in the District of Columbia at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/bikereg>

» Get details on the bike helmet law in DC at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/bikesafety>

» The MPD offers theft prevention tips as well as a variety of other tips on ways to protect yourself and your property. Check out all of our safety tips online at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

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

### DATA BOX

<b>Homicides</b>	as of 4/1/11
2011: 22	
2010: 24	
% Change: -8.3%	
Closure Rate: 81% (18 closures)	
<b>Adult Arrests</b>	week end. 3/26/11
Data Not Available	
<b>Juvenile Activity</b>	week end. 3/26/11
Data Not Available	
<b>Firearm Recoveries</b>	as of 3/21/11
March: 95	
2011 Total: 409	
<b>Traffic Fatalities</b>	as of 4/1/11
2011: 11	
2010: 6	
% Change: 83.3%	

#### NEWS & NOTES

#### Also Noteworthy

**Street Closures for Cherry Blossom 10-Miler on 4/3.** The area around the Tidal Basin, including portions of Rock Creek Parkway and Ohio Drive will be closed between 4 am and 11 am on Sunday, April 3 for the Cherry Blossom Ten-Mile Run. Get

complete details, including a map, at <http://cherryblossom.org>.

**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>.

#### Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at [kaylin.castelli@dc.gov](mailto:kaylin.castelli@dc.gov)

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