

# WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



*Friday, February 24, 2012*

## REPORT CRIMES ONLINE USING THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT'S NEW CITIZEN ONLINE REPORTING TOOL

The Metropolitan Police Department recently launched its Citizen Online Reporting Tool. This application gives users the ability to report certain types of incidents that don't require a police officer to witness or gather the information. Through the Citizen Online Reporting Tool, you can now report the following types of incidents:

- Lost property
- Lost vehicle tags
- Stolen vehicle tags
- Theft/theft from auto
- Destruction of property
- Damage to property

While not every crime is avoidable, there are certain precautions you can take to reduce your risk of becoming a victim of certain property crimes. One of the most common types of theft is theft of valuables from your automobile. Theft from auto is strictly a crime of opportunity that can be prevented if you take away the opportunity. Thieves generally won't waste their time breaking into autos that don't have valuables in plain sight, so follow these tips to reduce your risk!

- » **Keep Your Valuables Out of Sight.** The best way to prevent theft from your auto is to always keep valuables out of sight. Never leave cell phones, briefcases, suitcases, or electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, laptop computers, etc.) in your car in plain view. Take these items with you, or secure them—all the time, every time.
- » **Secure Your GPS Device.** While many GPS devices are mounted in the dashboard of the vehicle, the MPD encourages anyone who uses a portable GPS device to take it with you, along with any other items of value, when you park the car.
- » **Use Your Trunk.** If your car has a trunk, use it. Put valuables in there or in a locked glove compartment. Hiding items under seats is better than leaving them in plain view, but securing them inside the glove compartment or trunk is a far better deterrent.
- » **Don't Tempt Thieves with New Purchases**
- » **Hide Your Packages.** Any time you're shopping, place packages in the trunk, not on the passenger seats or floors.
- » **Lock It Up.** Keep your car doors and windows locked—all the time!

» To file a police report online, or to learn more about this application, go to:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/onlinepolice-report>

» The MPD offers a variety of safety tips to help reduce your risk of becoming a victim. Download the brochures or read them online at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

## PROTECT YOUR HANDHELD DEVICES

The officers of the Metropolitan Police Department would like to remind members of the public to be cautious when making electronic purchases, particularly on days of new releases of popular devices and gadgets. If you have plans to make a major purchase of a popular computer, tablet, or phone, please remember these important safety tips:

- » If an online tracking system is available for your device, get the extra assistance in the store for setup before exiting the store.
- » Don't be distracted as you exit local cell phone stores and other electronic specialty stores that sell these items. Be deliberate as you exit these stores, concealing your purchase(s) and focusing on getting to your next destination. Cell phones and other music devices are major distractions when in use.
- » Report suspicious people. Inside a store: Do you notice people who are paying more attention to the purchases being made, rather than checking out new products? Outside a store: Do you see suspicious people standing at or near the exit for no real purpose? Report these behaviors to police.
- » Try to shop with a friend. Most victims who report crimes that involve snatching new products are people who have shopped alone. If you have an elderly parent, please make preparations to accompany him or her to make these kinds of purchases or suggest ordering them online.
- » Never hesitate to point out suspicious activity or people to local officers or security guards. Remember the "See Something, Say Something" campaign and dial 9-1-1 if you need an officer dispatched to your location.

» Get information on resources for recovering a stolen gadget, and download a one-page information sheet on this topic at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/protectyourgadget>

## DC POLICE ALERTS PROVIDE RAPID TEXT NOTIFICATION

The Alert DC system provides rapid text notification and update information during a major crisis or emergency. This system delivers important emergency alerts, notifications and updates on a range of devices including your email account, cell phone, pager, BlackBerry and wireless PDA.

When an incident or emergency occurs, authorized DC Homeland Security & Emergency Management personnel can rapidly notify you using this community alert system. Alert DC is your personal connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information.

Alert DC is available to citizens of the District of Columbia as well as individuals traveling to or working in the District. In addition to Alert DC, users may register for the DC Police Alert Program through the same website. The DC Police Alert Program notifies businesses and residents about crimes in their police district or service area. This program sends alerts when there is information regarding a crime and instructs what to do if recipients have information to share. Sign up for an account to receive alerts and emergency notifications today.

» Get more information on Alert DC and DC Police  
Alert text alerts at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/policealert>

DATA BOX	
<b>Homicides</b>	as of 2/24/12
2012: 12	
2011: 14	
% Change: -14.3%	
Closure Rate: 50% (6 closures)	
<b>Firearm Recoveries</b>	as of 2/20/12
February: 103	
2012 Total: 208	
<b>Traffic Fatalities</b>	as of 2/24/12
2012: 3	
2011: 5	
% Change: -40.0%	

### NEWS & NOTES

#### Also Noteworthy

**Join the MPD Reserve Corps.** The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing

program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolice.jobs>.

**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 more at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

### 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)

### 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](http://mpdc.dc.gov)**