

# WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



*Friday, July 27, 2012*

## DC PREPARES FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT ON AUGUST 7

On Tuesday, August 7, thousands of DC residents are expected to join with their neighbors, police officers and other community leaders in celebrating National Night Out (NNO). From community cookouts to open houses – block parties, candlelight vigils and athletic events – DC is gearing up for the 29th annual celebration of “America’s Night Out Against Crime.” The citywide kickoff will begin at 5 pm at the Anacostia Public Library in the



Seventh Police District. Public safety characters McGruff the Crime Dog® and the National Knight® will be available to meet attendees and have their photos taken. In addition to the numerous activities taking place at the kickoff event, communities across DC – in all seven police districts – have scheduled NNO events during the late afternoon and evening hours.

National Night Out is an annual event, sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch, that takes place on the first Tuesday in August. Each year, the Metropolitan Police Department actively participates in National Night Out by rallying community members throughout the District of Columbia to join with neighbors and police officers in their PSAs to be a part of this annual event.

The National Night Out campaign involves citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials from 9,500 communities from all 50 states, US territories, Canadian cities and military bases worldwide.

» A complete list of events scheduled to take place in the seven police districts is available online. For that and other information about National Night Out in DC, go to:

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

» Even if you can't participate in an organized National Night Out event, you can still be involved. Residents are encouraged to turn on their exterior lights on the evening of August 7 — as a show of neighborhood solidarity against crime. Learn more about NNO at:

<http://www.nno.org>

## WHEN CONSIDERING HOME REPAIRS, WATCH OUT FOR SCAMMERS

Following the hot weather, strong winds and heavy rains that hit DC in recent weeks, you may have found that your home is now in need of some repairs. Some of the most common cons and swindles at times like this 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/safety>

## BURGLARY PREVENTION IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Have you ever been locked out of your home? Were you able to get in anyway? Now think about it...if you could break into your own home, it's just as easy for someone else to break in, too. One out of ten homes will be burglarized this year, and many intruders will spend no more than 60 seconds trying to break into a home. The best prediction of a future burglary is a past burglary. Therefore, it is important to take preventative measures now. Strong locks—and good neighbors who look out for one another—can be effective deterrents to burglars. Here are a few tips that can help you keep you—and your property—safe and secure.

Check—and use—your door and window locks. Make sure every external door has a strong, well-installed dead bolt lock. Sliding glass doors offer easy access if they are not properly secured. You can secure them by putting a broomstick or dowel in the inside track to jam the door or by installing commercially available locks. To prevent the door being lifted off of the track, drill a hole through the sliding door frame and the fixed frame. Then insert a pin in the hole. Never hide keys around the outside of your home. Instead, give an extra key to a neighbor you trust. When you move into a new house or apartment, re-key the locks.

Another good idea is to take a look at your home from the outside. Keep in mind the following tips to help make your home as safe as it can be:

- » Burglars hate bright lights. Install outside lights and keep them on at night. Motion-detector lights can be particularly effective.
- » Keep your yard clean. Prune shrubbery so it doesn't hide windows or doors. Cut back tree limbs that a burglar could use to climb to an upper-level window.
- » If you travel, create the illusion that you are at home by getting timers that will turn lights (and perhaps a television or radio) on and off in different parts of your home throughout the day and evening hours. Lights burning 24 hours a day signal an empty house.
- » Leave shades, blinds, and curtains in normal positions. And make sure you don't let your mail and/or newspapers pile up. Call the post office and newspaper to stop delivery or have a neighbor pick them up.
- » Make a list of your valuables, such as TVs, stereos, computers, and jewelry. Take pictures of the items, list their serial numbers and description. This will help police if your home is burglarized.

While most burglars prefer to strike when no one is home, intruders can commit other crimes such as rape, robbery, and assault if they are surprised by someone entering the home, or if they pick a home that is occupied. If something looks questionable – a slit screen, a broken window or an open door – don't go in. Call the police from a neighbor's house, a cell phone, or a public phone. At night, if you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely if you can, then call the police. If you can't leave, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call the police. If an intruder is in your room, pretend you are asleep.

» Get additional information on burglary prevention online at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/burglary>

» The MPD offers a large selection of crime prevention and safety tips. Learn more at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>



### DATA BOX

#### Homicides as of 7/27/12

2012: 50

2011: 62

% Change: -19.4%

Closure Rate: 82% (41 closures)

#### Adult Arrests (week end. 7/21/12)

Total Arrests: 783

Weapons: 25

Robbery: 18

Unauthorized Use of Vehicle: 11

Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 21

Narcotics: 106

#### Juvenile Activity (week end. 7/21/12)

Total Arrests: 39

Weapons: 1

Robbery: 10

Unauthorized Use of Vehicle: 0

Narcotics: 3

#### Firearm Recoveries as of 7/23/12

July: 88

2012 Total: 1,063

#### Traffic Fatalities as of 7/27/12

2012: 9

2011: 23

% Change: 60.9%

### NEWS & NOTES

#### Also Noteworthy

**Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline.** The Use the CyberTipline to report 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>.

**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>.

### 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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