

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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



Friday, March 7, 2014

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BECOMING A ROBBERY VICTIM

Robbery and assault are serious crimes. While money is often the motivation, these incidents are considered crimes of violence because they involve the threat or actual use of physical violence. The basic rules of robbery prevention are to be sensible and to be alert. The following tips will also help reduce the risk of robbery or assault.

Personal Safety Tips on the Street

- If possible, don't walk alone during late-night hours.
- Let a family member or friend know your destination and your estimated time of arrival or return. That way, the police can be notified as quickly as possible if there is a problem.
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible. Avoid alleys, vacant lots, wooded areas, and other short-cuts or secluded areas. They are usually not well-lit or heavily traveled.
- Walk on the sidewalk whenever possible. Walk close to the curb, avoiding doorways, bushes, and other potential hiding places.
- Walk confidently, directly, and at a steady pace. Don't stop to talk to strangers.
- Wear clothing and shoes that give you freedom of movement. And don't burden yourself with too many packages or items.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. If you are wearing headphones, don't turn up the volume so high that you cannot hear outside noises.
- Avoid carrying large sums of cash, or displaying expensive jewelry in public.

Basic Street Smarts

- Wherever you are—on the street, in an office building or shopping mall, driving, waiting for a bus or subway—stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings.
- Send the message that you're calm, confident, and know where you're going.
- Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or leave.
- Know the neighborhoods where you live and work.

If Someone Tries to Rob You

- Don't resist. Give up your property—don't give up your life.
- Report the crime to the police. Try to describe the attacker accurately. Your actions can help prevent others from becoming victims.

Self defense measures are most effective when applied as preventive steps—avoiding the crime in the first place. These measures include running away, hiding, screaming, and raising an alarm—remember, more people will respond to someone yelling “Fire” than they will to “Help!”

Anyone who is the victim of a crime or witnesses a crime in progress should call 911 immediately. Individuals who have information regarding crimes should call police at **202-727-9099**. Additionally information may be submitted to the **TEXT TIP LINE** by text messaging **50411**. The Metropolitan Police Department currently offers a **reward of up to \$10,000** to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for any robbery committed in the District of Columbia.

» Get more tips on guarding against robbery and assault at:

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

» The MPD encourages members of the public to visit our YouTube page to view videos of suspects from active cases and contact police if they recognize persons of interest at:

<http://www.youtube.com/OfficialDCPolice>

PRACTICE SAFE BIKING; SECURE YOUR BIKE 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. Whether you use a bicycle to get to and from school, for your daily work commute, or for exercise, it is important to follow the DC Bike Laws. The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) have worked together to develop a Pocket Guide to DC Bike Laws designed to inform both cyclists and law enforcement officers of the rights and responsibilities of cyclists on DC Streets. This guide includes information on traffic laws, common traffic crashes and enforcement errors, bicycling infractions, safety equipment, what to do in case of a bike crash, bike parking/security, as well as other information. This handy guide is available for download from the DDOT website.

In addition to being safe on the road, it is important that you always secure your bicycle 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 not 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 that may be.

- » To learn more about the District's Bicycle Program visit:
<http://ddot.dc.gov/page/bicycle-program>
- » WABA and DDOT have prepared a Pocket Guide to DC's Bike Laws which is available on the DDOT website at:
http://www.dc.gov/DC/DDOT/Publication%20Files/On%20Your%20Street/Bicycles%20and%20Pedestrians/Bicycles/Bicycle%20Laws/Pocket_Bike_Law_Guide.pdf
- » WABA has created a simple table that details selected bicycle guidelines for DC, Maryland and Virginia online at:
<http://www.waba.org/resources/laws.php>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Daylight Saving Time Change this Weekend. Don't forget to set your clocks this weekend. At 2 am on Sunday, we will "spring ahead" by moving our clocks one hour forward for Daylight Saving Time.

DPW's Street Sweeping Program Resumes. Between March 10 and October

31, sweepers operate along residential streets where signs are posted restricting parking during street sweeping hours. A \$45 ticket may be issued for violating sweeping hours. Learn more about DPW's street sweeping program at <http://dpw.dc.gov/page/street-and-alley-cleaning>.

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>.

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

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