



zone 3 newsletter fall 2009

ZONE 3 BORDERS:

Harlem, Chicago, Austin, and North Blvd.

ZONE 3 MEETINGS

The 4th Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm in the Main Oak Park Public Library.

MCGRUFF HOMES

McGruff Houses provide safe locations in neighborhoods where children can seek nearby assistance if they feel threatened or scared. Please consider making your home a McGruff House. For more information, please contact Officer Murphy, and attend your regular monthly zone meeting.

Resident Beat Officer Raphael Murphy / 708.305.9779 / rmurphy@oak-park.us

Reporting Suspicious Activity

The Police Department is in the business of preventing crime and catching criminals. That's why we have officers in police cars patrolling Oak Park twenty four hours a day, every day of the year. Even so, we know that we simply cannot be everywhere at once, so we rely on the calls we get from citizens reporting crime and suspicious activity. The value of the public's participation in protecting the community from crime cannot be overstated.

So let's get this point across right away: **The Police want you to report suspicious activity.**

What is suspicious activity? If you see or hear something that causes you to believe that a crime has been, is being, or is about to be committed. This could be almost anything, but mostly it will be something that seems out of place. We are all pretty much experts in regard to our homes and neighborhoods, and when something doesn't feel right the chances are good that it isn't. See someone you don't recognize in your neighbor's backyard? Has

the same unfamiliar car driven through your alley three times in ten minutes? Did you hear the sound of glass breaking? Don't second guess your instincts. Don't be embarrassed. The Police want to investigate these types of circumstances, and you can help them best by calling quickly, and providing as much information as possible.

Timeliness and accurate descriptions are vital to an officer's response. Responding officers want to know what happened, when and where, and who was involved. Describe the events that raised your suspicions. Describe persons by sex, race, age, height, physical build, hair, clothing, items carried, and any other distinguishing characteristics. When describing vehicles, the vehicle license number and state can be immensely helpful, as can vehicle make, model, color, age, and condition. Whether a person or a car, the last direction of travel is important information.

When reporting suspicious activity you do not have to meet with the officer if you choose not to, although it

can sometimes be helpful.

Remember to keep in touch with your neighbors. Getting to know them will improve your awareness of unfamiliar persons and suspicious activity. Getting to know your neighbors is also important so that you can learn what they plan to do in response to suspicious activity. Are you sure that your neighbor will call the police quickly if he sees someone climbing into your dining room window? It is worth suffering a little embarrassment to have the police investigating what may very well be a crime in progress.

How do you report suspicious activity? Calling **911** is the most appropriate way to summon police when you suspect that a crime has just been, is being, or is about to be committed. Suspicious activity that is in progress can also be reported via the non-emergency dispatch number **708-386-2131**, and officers will respond to investigate. But don't waste time deciding. When in doubt, just call 911.



Oak Park Police
123 Madison, Oak
Park

PHONE:
708.386.3800

For Emergencies
Dial
911

Halloween

It's October and Halloween is almost upon us. Here are a few safety tips for trick or treaters:

Official hours for trick or treating are 3pm to 7pm on Saturday Oct. 31.

Parents should accompany children, especially after dark, and inspect all treats.

Cross streets at corners, not mid-block, and especially do not cross between parked cars.

Be certain that costumes are going to be visible to motorists. Costumes should not restrict movement, vision, or hearing.

Give and accept only wrapped and packaged treats.

Go out in daylight, and carry a flashlight in case you're out past dark.

Stay within your neighborhood, and visit homes you know.


If you happen to be driving during trick or treating, take extra care.

Parents should remind their teens what sort of behavior is acceptable, and that vandalism and disorderly conduct are not ignored by the police on Halloween.

Remember to report dangerous or suspicious activities to the police.

Have fun!

RBO Murphy
708-305-9779
rmurphy@oak-park.us



Holiday Safety

The Holidays are rapidly approaching, and the holiday shopping season, bringing as it does numerous shoppers out on the streets carrying boxes and bags, cars full of purchases, and lots of money changing hands never fails to bring with it the opportunity for criminal activity. To reduce your chances of becoming a victim, please take the following tips into consideration.

Be alert while shopping.

Keep your wallet in a pocket that is difficult for a thief to access. If you must carry a purse, keep it close, with the strap across your body. Don't carry excessive cash, and bring only the cards you need.

Don't leave packages in plain view in your vehicle. Place them in the trunk, or otherwise out of sight. At home, don't place packages where they may be visible to someone choosing a burglary target.

Try to have mailed packages only delivered where or when someone is always available to receive them. Packages are often stolen from porches and unlocked vestibules.

If you will be away from home for the holidays, put some lights on timers, and ask a friend to collect your mail, shovel your walks, and check on the home. You can also request vacation house checks by the police by calling your resident beat officer.

Crime Maps On-Line

Anyone interested in tracking crime within the Village of Oak Park can do so on a daily basis with an on-line resource available on the Village's website by directing a web browser to:

<http://www.oak-park.us/Police/crime.cfm>

The Crime Analysis and Statistics page contains a list of "crime maps" that

show daily reported crime using icons placed in approximate geographic locations.

The Oak Park Police Department collects and compiles data on all crimes investigated in the Village. The crime maps on this web page include offenses such as aggravated assault, arson, burglary, homicide, rape,

theft, motor vehicle theft and robbery. The maps do not reflect all calls for service.

Icons on the daily maps are annotated. Drag the cursor over the icon to see more information regarding the event. Monthly compiled maps are also available.