

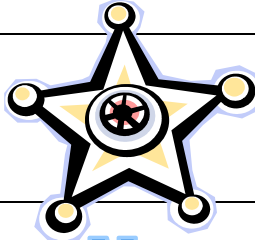
Slow down and help make

Oak Park a safe town!

Zone 5 Newsletter



Resident Beat Officer
A. Paul Razzino
358-5577
razzino@oak-park.us



Zone 5 Borders
Oak Park to Harlem
Harrison to South Blvd.

Happy New Year

Winter 2010



New Year Resolution

I would like to wish all the residents and business owners of Zone 5 a Happy New Year. I hope that everyone had an enjoyable and safe holiday season and I hope that 2010 will be a safe and prosperous year for all. And remember, if we all put in a little extra effort and follow some basic crime prevention techniques, we can easily make 2010 the safest year yet. Make crime prevention one of your new year's resolutions

A shoveled sidewalk is a safer sidewalk

Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians; they are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. If the snow or ice have become too hard, then sand, salt or other abrasive material may be used to make pedestrian travel reasonably safe. The shoveling requirement applies to both business and residential property owners. While failure to clear a sidewalk fronting or abutting one's property could lead to a ticket and fine, the Village is counting on the community to comply willingly — especially since so many sidewalks in Oak Park are walking routes to and from neighborhood schools. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. The Village also has compiled a list of resources where those in need can turn for help. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 358.5700 or e-mail

publicworks@oak-park.us

I would like to take a moment to offer some driving tips that are especially useful during the winter months. First off, be patient. Allow plenty of time to get to your destination. Is it really worth it to drive recklessly just to save a few seconds? With the slick roads, put extra space between you and the car in front of you, to allow more time for you to stop in case of an emergency. If you find yourself having to stop suddenly, know what type of braking system your car employs. Most cars today are equipped with Anti Locking Brakes (ABS). We've all been taught that we should pump the brakes gently when attempting to stop suddenly on a slick road, to avoid skidding. If your car does not have ABS, then this is correct. However, if it does, keep the brake pedal depressed. That vibration you feel in the pedal is the ABS actually pumping the brakes for you. Of course, refer to your car owner's manual for further driving tips. In the event of a traffic crash, call the police. If it is safe and possible to do so, move your car to the side of the road. If it is not, simply wait for us to get there. Cell phones are strongly recommended, along with extra blankets, extra clothing, a first aid kit, a spare tire, maps, flares and food rations, such as dried fruit and nuts. It is a good idea to keep the gas tank as full as possible to help keep the gas line from freezing, and also to avoid getting stranded out in the cold. Following these safety tips will make your winter driving a lot less stressful and could even save your life

Police urge Oak Parkers to blow a whistle and help stop a crime

When Oak Park Police officers began handing out free whistles to residents at CTA train stops they are combining the low-tech tool of a loud, shrill sound with the high-tech speed of a cell phone to help fight crime. The program, based on similar police initiative popular in the 1980s, is rooted in the simple idea of citizens looking out for each other. Called Blow a Whistle, Stop a Crime, the goal, police say, is to give individuals another tool for letting everyone within ear shot know that someone needs help and to call 9-1-1. Preventing crime is not about just having police officers everywhere, all the time, police say, but having alert citizens who are willing to get involved. And that's what the whistle program is all about — alert citizens getting involved. Individuals don't need to wear the whistle around their neck or always have it in their hand, according to police. They just need to keep it handy, such as in one's purse or on one's keychain and then pull it out when they think they might be about to encounter a risky situation. In fact, police say individuals don't even have to carry a whistle to get involved in the program — they only have to call 9-1-1 immediately if they hear a whistle being blown. Most of the crime in Oak Park involves bicycle thefts and garage burglaries. But such statistics mean little if you are the victim of a robbery or a snatch-and-run, police say, which are the very types of crimes they believe the whistle program can help prevent. Community Bank of Oak Park River Forest is co-sponsoring the program by helping underwrite the cost of more than 3,000 whistles and related crime-prevention educational materials. The program would not have been possible without the bank's participation, police say. While CTA train riders were the first to get free whistles, police are distributing them to others as well — at least while supplies last. Police say they also are open to other local businesses that might want to help support the program by helping purchase more whistles. For more information on the Blow a Whistle, Stop a Crime program, call 708.386.3800 or e-mail police@oak-park.us. Information also is posted at www.oak-park.us/police.

Walking routes to schools made safer

The Village's safe walking routes to schools program includes new traffic control signs, high-visibility pavement markings and detailed maps parents can use to help their children choose the safest route to each of the community's elementary and middle schools. The following improvements have been made throughout the Village:

- Stop signs added and upgraded at key intersections, some with advance warning signs to alert drivers.
- Higher-visibility school speed limit signs installed within close proximity of school zone boundaries.
- Additional school crossing signs and directional arrows added to key crossings.
- School names with arrows stenciled onto sidewalk along routes to schools.

Maps for the safe walking routes to each school are posted at www.oak-park.us/publicworks. For information, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

Crime Update

There have been numerous reports of graffiti throughout Oak Park over the past several months. Most of the graffiti is "tagging" which, is meant to be a person's name with the purpose of marking his/her name in as many places as possible. Most of the tagging is done by local juveniles who either use large markers or spray paint. Remember, graffiti is a CRIME that the police department takes very seriously. So, if you know someone who has markers or spray paint you should bring it to their parent's attention. For more information on graffiti and its removal please feel free to give me a call.

Block Captains Wanted

- The police department is looking for a block captain for each block in each zone. If you're interested in becoming the captain of your block then give me call or drop me an e-mail.