

Neighborhood Watch Crime Bulletin #68 To All Our Neighborhood Watch Personnel:

Our Latest and Greatest Crime Bulletin



Holiday Scam Alerts:

With the holiday season rapidly approaching, it seems that **Scammers** are working overtime to steal your money. Here are some of our most recent attempts at scamming in Ocean Pines:

- 1) A scammer, representing himself as from Harris Teeter, telephoned a resident and asked if the resident wanted to be a "Mystery Shopper" for Harris Teeter. In follow-up, the resident received an alleged check for \$1,890.00. The resident was to then purchase \$1,700 "iTunes" cards and reveal the numbers to the scammer. Needless to say, if our resident had bought the cards, (resident did not), then a \$1,700 theft would have occurred.
- 2) A resident received a phone call from a middle-eastern sounding individual. The called advised the resident that they had won a \$2.5 million dollar prize from Publisher's Clearing House. Just obtain some gift cards and wire the money to the scammer, they were advised. No money was lost.
- 3) A resident was called and advised that a relative was in jail, and could the resident wire jail money for bail? Unfortunately, \$4,000 was lost in this case.
- 4) A resident was telephoned and notified by a scammer that he was from the Internal Revenue Service. The resident, the scammer stated, owed money that had to be paid immediately or the resident would be prosecuted. Just wire the money to the IRS at the scammer's address!

What common threads do these scams all have? First they all start with a **telephone call**. No governmental agency or legitimate business calls via telephone and demands money. Second, when someone asks you to **WIRE money or send gift cards**, BEWARE! These are means that are hard or impossible to track. Usually the caller is outside the United States. **Never** respond to telephone solicitations, unless YOU have initiated contact with a legitimate vendor, you have verified.

Drunk Driving Arrests:

Recently, I have noticed an upturn in drunk driving arrests in our community. With the holiday season, and holiday parties, there is a need to utilize designated drivers, or alternate transportation, such as taxi-cabs, in lieu of driving after drinking alcohol. Our Officers are highly trained in detection of drunk drivers, and we have pledged to keep our roadways as safe as possible, for your protection. Enjoy the holidays, but keep common sense in mind!

Domestic Violence Arrests:

Since our last Crime Bulletin we have made three domestic violence arrests. In addition to these arrests, we also arrested an individual for violation of an existing protective order. These orders are signed by a judge and are designed to separate abusers from their victims. Unfortunately, some abusers ignore the order of the court and are quickly arrested for their violations.

Child Pornography Arrest:

A 24 year old resident was arrested for violations of child pornography laws. The suspect was communicating with a 14 year old victim and downloading pornographic images of her. A search warrant of his residence yielded much evidence of these violations.

Sexual Offense Arrest:

A 15 year old female juvenile met an individual, who she became acquainted with. The suspect then used force to commit an unwanted sexual offense with her. After investigation, police located and arrested the suspect.

Burglary Arrest:

Police located a suspect who had burglarized a local residence, inside the premises. The suspect had cut a screen from a window and was hiding in a bedroom closet. The suspect was known to the female victim, who had earlier denied entry to the suspect.

Tampering with Autos Arrest:

An alert resident noticed a suspicious subject looking inside parked vehicles, and trying to enter them. Police located the witness and the suspect, who was homeless. After investigation, police determined he had tampered with a number of parked vehicles, utilizing a pick-tool to attempt entry. This case points out the need for citizens to immediately report suspicious activity to police. **A great job by our resident!!!**

Drunk Driving Arrests:

Since our last Crime Bulletin, police have made eight (8) drunk driving arrests in our community.

Special Events:

Police, along with our Neighborhood Watch personnel, direct traffic at large community events. Recently we directed traffic at these events:

- 1) Community Craft Fair
- 2) Car Show parade and event
- 3) Halloween Community Event
- 4) Veteran's Day Ceremony

I would like to give a special **"THANK YOU"** to our Neighborhood Watch civilian volunteers. Without compensation, they assist in directing traffic and parking vehicles. This frees up uniformed police personnel and saves us some overtime pay.

Take a bite out of crime. Join Neighborhood Watch. Call Jim Hamlin 410-422-2736

Chief David C. Massey, Ed.D.

Ocean Pines Police Department