



Watch Works

Charles County
Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Rex W. Coffey
March 2014

Reduce the opportunity for crime

Most studies and polls show that the fear of crime ranks as one of the chief concerns of citizens. This concern can be healthy if it leads to positive steps to reduce the chance that you will be victimized. Unjustified fear can become a very negative influence which mars one's enjoyment of life.

The crimes we all fear the most are crimes of violence, but those are the ones that happen the least.

Most murders and assaults are committed by relatives or friends as the result of a dispute, and not by strangers.

Older people are not victimized to a greater extent than the rest of the population, with a few exceptions, such as purse snatching.

The most frequent crimes are property crimes, and they are most likely to happen when you are away.

These facts are generally consistent in all research. They suggest that people need not live with a paralyz-

ing fear of crime. They also suggest that each of us can deal with the situation intelligently by taking steps to reduce the opportunity for crime at our home and in the way we live.

Crime prevention is the practice of spotting criminal opportunities and then doing something to reduce or eliminate those opportunities in a common-sense way.

Property Marking:

Get an engraver. Mark your property with a number you can give the police that identifies the item as yours. You should especially mark the types of items which are most commonly stolen: TV's, cameras, guns, video game consoles, etc. Don't forget to mark items you keep in your car.

Lock up:

Amazingly, some home and vehicle burglaries happen because someone didn't lock a door or window. Often windows are even left open.

Remembering that good

visibility will discourage the potential burglar, you should have at least standard lighting at your doorways.

Failure to close and lock garage doors presents a serious security problem. If an intruder gains entrance to the garage, he or she will be concealed and may find the tools necessary to continue the burglary into the home.

It's extremely important to make your home look "lived in" when you're away. Keep the garage door closed and locked at all times so no one can see when your car is not there.

Use automatic timers to turn your lights on at night and off in the morning.

Ask someone to pick up your newspaper and mail. Ask the neighbor to park his or her car in front of your house from time to time to give the appearance that someone is coming and going regularly.

Dates to Remember

March 9: Daylight Saving Time begins

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 20: Spring begins



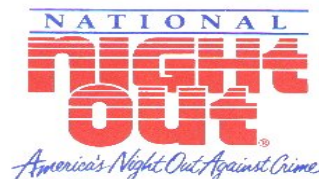
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NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2014

Yes, it's closer than you think! Less than 6 months. National Night Out will be held on August 5, 2014, and yes, it's usually the hottest day of the year. Start making plans now so that it will

be a little easier on you later. Have a meeting with your neighbors and decide what kind of food you will be serving. Cook-outs, pizza parties or dessert socials go on all over

Charles County. Are you planning on any kids games or will the adults be playing bingo? Whatever you decide, I'm sure everyone will come out for this once a year celebration.



Outdoor Safety Tips

Grilling Safety

Americans enjoy more than three billion barbecues each year. But barbecuing can be dangerous, even deadly, if you are not careful.

The following tips can make your grilling experience safer:

- When ready to barbecue, protect yourself by wearing a heavy apron and an oven mitt that fits high up over your forearm.
- With gas grills, make sure the gas cylinder is always stored outside and away from your house. Make sure the valves are turned off when you are not using them. Check regularly for leaks in the connections using a soap and water mix that will show bubbles where gas escapes.
- Barbecue grills should be kept on a level surface away from the house, garage, landscaping, and most of all, children.
- For charcoal grills, only use starter fluids designed for those grills. Never use gasoline and use a limited amount of starter fluid. If the fire is too slow, rekindle with

dry kindling and add more charcoal if necessary. Never add more liquid fuel or you could end up with a flash fire.

- Be sure to soak the coals with water before you put them in the trash.
- Always remember that grills remain hot long after you are through barbecuing.
- If you get burned, run cool water over the injury for 10-15 minutes. Never put butter or salve on burns because they will seal in the heat and cause further blistering. If you receive a serious burn, the sooner you get medical attention the better.

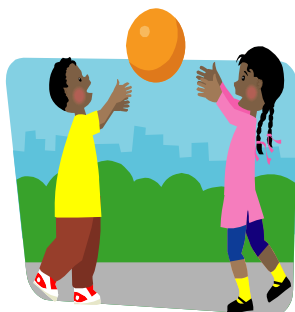
Lawnmower Safety

Each year, people are injured seriously enough by lawnmowers to require emergency room medical treatment. Only a small percentage of the injuries are caused by mechanical failure most are the result of human error.

- Become familiar with your mower.
- Read the owner's

manual before using the mower for the first time. Note all safety and operating instructions.

- Always wear non-slip shoes instead of tennis shoes or sandals. Long pants help protect your legs from objects that may be thrown from under the mower.
- Never leave a mower running unattended.
- Always start the mower outdoors, not in your garage where carbon monoxide can collect.
- Before you start mowing, be sure the lawn is free of tree limbs, rocks, wires and other debris, which can get caught up in the blades.
- The main source of danger is the blade. To perform its task efficiently, the mower blade must be sharp and travel at high speed.
- Anytime it is necessary to reach under the mower, disconnect the spark plug wire to insure that the engine cannot start. It takes a little extra time, but not as long as it does to recover from a serious injury.
- BE SAFE!



A WORD FROM YOUR COMMUNITY ORGANIZER: Connie Gray 301-932-3080

I know after all the snow this year everyone is ready for spring. Just to get outside and work on the yard and get some sunshine will be nice.

Get together with some of your neighbors and walk the neighborhood, meeting your neighbors and checking to see if anything looks out of place. Does your neighborhood have a

If you would like more information on forming a watch, please contact me. It doesn't take much time or trouble. You get together at least every other month and discuss what is going on in your neighborhood. Whether there are problems or you would like to have a neighborhood yard sale, this is a good time to discuss it all. Maybe you

would like to plant flowers at the entrance of your neighborhood and just want opinions or help. The more neighbors you know and the more you know about your neighbors, the safer your neighborhood becomes.



Crime Prevention for Children

It has been said that children are our most valuable resource. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we take positive measures to insure their safety and prevent them from becoming victims of crime.

Parents....

- **NEVER** leave children alone; not at home, in a vehicle, at play, or anywhere.
- Define what a **STRANGER** (TRICKY PERSON) is. Let kids know that just because they see someone everyday (e.g., mailman, paperboy, neighbor, etc.), it does not mean these people are not strangers.
- Teach your children their full name, your name, full address, and

phone number, including area codes. Teach them how to use a phone.

- Teach your children the "What If...?" Game, making up different dangerous situations that they might encounter and helping them play out what they would do in the situation.
- Set up procedures with your child's school or day care center as to whom the child will be released to other than yourself, and what notification procedure they are to follow if the child does not show up on time.
- Teach your children that their body is private and no one has

the right to touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If anyone touches them in a wrong way they should do these three things; SAY NO, GET AWAY, and TELL SOMEONE they trust.

It's far more likely your kid is going to be abused by someone they have a relationship with, because most cases of abuse follow long periods of grooming— both of the kid and his or her family.

Bad guys groom you and your kids to gauge whether or not you're paying attention to what they're doing, and/or to lure you into dropping your guard. **DON'T EVER DROP YOUR GUARD!!**





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