



Watch Works

Charles County
Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Troy Berry
October 2015

Fall Safety Notes

While driving to work, I was surprised by a pedestrian pushing a bicycle down the shoulder of the highway. Wearing dark clothes and it being a rainy, gray, day he was very hard to see. If I had to use the shoulder for some reason it would not have been a good outcome. Please, if you have to walk near any roadway early in the morning or near dusk, wear light color clothing, a blinking light or reflective tape or reflective clothing would be better. With the change in seasons the days are shorter and it is harder to be seen by vehicles. Be as visible and careful as possible when you are on the road.

Winterize your vehicle now. Restock your vehi-

cle's emergency bag. Check the air in the spare tire, and making sure the windshield scraper is where you left it at the end of last winter. Purchase windshield washer fluid and antifreeze to have on hand.

Make sure new, young drivers know that rain soaked leaves can be as slippery as ice.

Keep walkways and driveways clear. As the leaves start to fall, they can make a slippery mess on your driveway and other walkways. Likewise, prepare now for the below freezing days on the horizon. Keep salt or sand at the ready to control icy patches where you and your family will be walking.

Clean the leaves out of the gutters of your home. Redirected water can pool up in your yard making ice where you walk.

Now is a good time to clean up the grill and put it away along with the lawn mower, hoses and other summer lawn supplies. Be careful when using a ladder to put these things away.

It seems sad that summer is over, but fall brings crisp fresh air, your favorite sweatshirts and cozy nights by the fire pit or fire place. The holiday season will be upon us soon enough. That's another group of safety notes.

Dates to Remember

October 12: Columbus Day

October 16, National Boss's Day

October 31: Halloween



Happy Halloween

Yes, it is that time of year again. Here are a few safety rules for Trick or Treating:

- Keep your house well lighted.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to the Sheriff's Office.
- Clear your yard and sidewalk of obstacles or decorations that may be hard to see in the dark.
- Keep costumes short to ensure that no one trips.
- Look for brightly colored costumes, attach reflector strips to the costumes and bags.
- Older kids should trick or treat in groups.
- Review the route for trick or treating beforehand and set a time when kids should be home.
- Have a plan if your child gets separated from his friends or from you.
- Remind your children not to enter strange houses or cars.
- Ask your Neighborhood Watch or local citizen's group to haunt (patrol) your community.
- If a sign outside reads "No candy here" let your kids know to stay clear of this house.

October is “Crime Prevention Month”



If you see something, say something.

If you see someone who might be up to no good or what they are doing looks suspicious, call the Charles County Sheriff's Office and report it. You can remain anonymous, no one will know you called us, and you might help us prevent a burglary or disrupt a crime in progress. Don't wait until we conduct a neighborhood canvass after a burglary to tell us you saw someone walking down the street with a pillow case filled up or you saw a strange vehicle in your neighbor's driveway. Be suspicious of such activity and call us to report it. Successful burglars will usually strike

again, and your house might be their next target if we don't stop them now.

Protect your home with these tips:

Remember, you could be being watched. Burglars often watch a neighborhood or home before striking, so try not to develop a pattern.

Change your habits:

When you leave your home, come back and check on it a few minutes later.

Use common sense: Always lock your doors and windows and keep your home well lighted.

Don't open your door to anyone with no business

inside. This isn't just to guard against robbery by force or threat of force: sometimes burglars who have no intention of using force will first try to get in under some pretext so they can scout out valuables and study locks, windows and other means of entry. Ask repairmen and others who claim to have business inside to show positive identification. If you have the slightest doubt, telephone their superiors back at work, getting the number from your directory. If you wish to help a lost or stranded motorist or deliveryman, you make the call while he waits outside.

When you do admit a workman or a salesperson you were expecting, do not leave them alone at any time.



Neighborhood Safety Tips For Parents

Know where your children are: Have your children tell you or ask permission before leaving the house and give them a time to check in or be home. When possible, have them leave a phone number of where they will be.

Help children learn important phone numbers: Have your children practice reciting their home phone number and address, and

your work and cell phone numbers. Tell your children where you will be and the best way to reach you.

Set limits on where your child can go in your neighborhood: Do you want them crossing busy roads? Playing in alleys or abandoned buildings? Are there certain homes you don't want your children to go to?

Get to know your children's friends: Meet their parents before letting your children go to their home and keep a list of their phone numbers.

Work together with your neighbors: Watch out for suspicious and unusual behavior in your neighborhood. Get to know your neighbors and their children so you can look out for one another.



Hurricanes, floods and wind, Oh My!

How often in the past few years have you heard the word “disaster”? This doesn't mean another 911 attack. Emergencies and disasters can strike quickly and without warning and can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services (water, gas, electricity or telephones) were cut off?

This could be a hurricane, local flooding or any other natural disaster.

- **Meet with your family members.** Talk to them about your plans and prepare them to put them in place.
- **Choose an “Out of Town” Contact.** After a disaster, it is often easier to make a long distance call than a local call from a disaster area.
- **Decide where to meet:** In the event of an emergency you may become separated. Choose a place near your home in case you can't return home.
- **Complete a Family Communication Plan:** Your plan should include contact information for family members, work and school.

- Plan for those with disabilities and other special needs.
- Plan for your pets.
- Utilities: know how to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves.
- Fire Extinguisher: make sure everyone knows how to use your fire extinguishers and where they are kept.
- First Aid/CPR & AED: take American Red Cross first aid and CPR/AED classes.
- Inventory Home Possessions: Make a record of your possessions to help you claim reimbursement in case of loss or damage. Store this information in a safe place away from the home (safe deposit box, work, friend's home).
- Vital Records and Documents: Birth and marriage certificates, social security cards, passports, wills, deeds and financial, insurance, and immunization records should be kept in a safe deposit box or other safe location.
- Assemble a “Disaster Supplies Kit”: A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items a family would probably need to stay safe and be more comfortable during and after a disaster.

Disaster supplies should be stored in a portable container(s) as close as possible to the exit door. Review the contents of your kit at least once per year or as your family needs change. Also, consider having emergency supplies in each vehicle and at your place of employment.

Your basic disaster kit should include:

- Three day supply of water. (one gallon per person, per day).
 - Three day supply of non-perishable food and manual can opener.
 - Portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
 - Flashlight and extra batteries.
 - First Aid kit and manual.
 - Sanitation and hygiene items (hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, and toilet paper).
 - Matches in waterproof container.
 - Kitchen accessories and cooking utensil.
- This isn't a complete list. Look up information on building a disaster supplies kit.



Natural Disasters





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