



CHARLES COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WATCH WORKS

SHERIFF TROY BERRY

FEBRUARY 2019

February 1:

Groundhog
Day

February

14th: Valen-
tines Day

February

18th: Presi-
dents Day

February

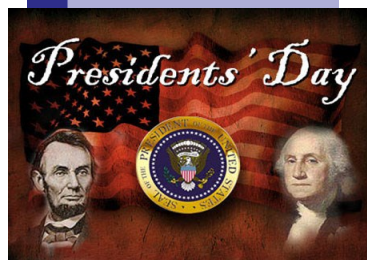
19th: Full
Moon

Home Security

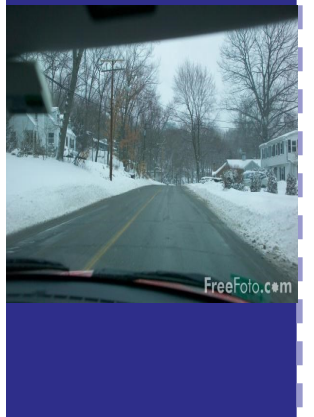
Your home is your most expensive asset. You want to protect it and those you love inside. Your home is most vulnerable to burglars when it is unoccupied or inadequately secured. Take precautions to help protect your home and family.

- Use automatic timers to turn lights and music on.
- Install outdoor lights with motion detectors. Keep your home's exterior well lit to eliminate hiding places.
- Keep hedges trimmed to eliminate hiding places.
- Maintain your yard regularly.
- Stop mail and newspaper delivery when out of town.
- Keep garage doors closed and locked, even when at home.
- Never leave a message on your answering machine telling callers you are away.
- Never post pictures on social media while you are away about where you are and what a great time you are having. Do this when you get home
- Install motion activated lights around the outside of your home, especially between the garage or carport and the house. A well-lit home discourages intruders.
- Install a security system and learn how to use it.

- Remember a lock is only a lock if you use it.
- Have the Sheriff's Office come do a FREE Home Security Survey. Contact Connie Gray 301-932-3080 or email a request to grayc@ccso.us.



Driving in Snow and Ice



The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all if you can avoid it. If you must drive:

- * Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- * Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
- * Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- * Keep your lights and windshield clean.
- * Keep your washer fluid full.
- * Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- * Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- * Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will

freeze first.

- * Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. Stay a safe distance behind.
- * Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.
- * Carry a cell phone, warm clothes and a snack, just in case you are stuck on the side of the road for a while.

This Month's Challenge

Return everything you borrow.

Run next door and see if we can borrow an extension cord. See if your brother will let you borrow his pressure washer. Sound familiar? It is less expensive to borrow something from someone else than it is to purchase one of your own, I get it. Unless

you break the one you borrowed and have to purchase a new one for the person you borrowed from. But borrowing means returning it. If it hangs around for months, who cares? They must not need it. This truly does matter. It is not yours and keeping it is the same as stealing. If they say you can keep it, we don't use it,

that's a different story. Just because you have forgotten to return it and think they have forgotten you have it is still not an excuse for you to claim it as your own. Make 2019 the year you returned everything and bought your own. Then you can sleep with a clear conscience.

CCSO
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZER
CONNIE GRAY
 301-932-3080
 grayc@ccso.us

Tax Times and Scammers



We have had a few reports of citizens getting phone calls from people claiming to be the IRS and demanding immediate payment of taxes via prepaid debit card or wire transfer. The callers are often hostile, insisting that taxes are owed and threatening individuals with arrest, deportation, and suspension of a business license or driver's license.

Taxpayers should know that their first contact with the IRS will not be a call from out of the blue, but through official correspondence sent through the mail. A big red flag for these scams are angry, threatening calls from people who say they are from the IRS and urging immediate payment. This is not how the IRS operates. You should hang up immediately and contact the IRS.

Ways to Tell if You're Being Scammed:

- If you owe taxes, the IRS will first contact you by mail, not telephone.
- The IRS never asks for credit card, debit card, or prepaid card information over the phone.
- The IRS never insists that you must pay your taxes using a specific payment method.
- The IRS never demands immediate payment over the phone and does not take enforcement action directly after a phone conversation. Taxpayers are usually given prior notice of IRS enforcement action regarding tax liens or tax levies.

Profile of a Scammer:

- Scammers use fake names and IRS badge numbers.
- Scammers may be able to recite the last 4 digits of a victim's Social Security number.
- Scammers may spoof the IRS toll free numbers on the caller ID.
- Victims may hear background noise and other calls being conducted, mimicking a call center.
- Scammers may threaten victims with jail time or driver's license suspension and then hang up after which another scammer will call impersonating the local police or DMV, and the caller ID seems to support their claim.

What to Do if You Get a Suspicious Call:

If you suspect a phone call might be a scam, hang up. Do not give away any of your personal information over the phone.

If you think you owe taxes, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040.

If you know you don't owe taxes or the caller made any threats call your local Sheriff's Office and contact the Federal Trade Commission and use the FTC Complaint Assistant at FTC.gov





Charles County Sheriff's Office

6915 Crain highway
P.O. Box 189
La Plata, MD 20646

(301)932-2222



REMINDER
FROM THE
CHARLES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



**LOCK YOUR
VEHICLE
DOORS**

#9PMROUTINE