

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, December 5, 2008

WITH THE COLDER WEATHER HERE, DON'T MAKE YOUR VEHICLE AN EASY TARGET

With colder temperatures taking hold in DC, there's something that police officers are on the lookout for: motorists who leave their vehicles running while unattended. To date in 2008, an estimated 4,900 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, according to preliminary statistics. And while it is impossible to tell how many auto thefts are the result of running vehicles left unattended, national statistics show that more than 20 percent of stolen autos had the key left in the ignition. As colder temperatures settle in, some drivers will be tempted to run their vehicle to warm it up, while they remain indoors. Other motorists may leave their vehicles running while they dash into a convenience store or other location. Their reasoning: they will be away from their cars for only a "brief" minute or two. In either instance, the practice is unwise, unsafe and illegal in the District of Columbia. Some auto thieves need as little as a minute to break into and steal a vehicle that is locked and without a key.

The time needed to steal a car that is unlocked, unattended and running is literally a matter of seconds. And under DC law, motorists who leave a motor vehicle running and unattended can receive a \$50 ticket and the vehicle may be impounded. This cold-weather season, the MPD asks all motorists to take appropriate measures to avoid being the victim of auto theft and to never leave their vehicles running unattended.

- » For more auto theft prevention and other safety tips, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

VIOLENT, PROPERTY CRIME DOWN IN NOVEMBER

Reported property crime was down 12% and violent crime was down 10% in DC compared to the same month last year, according to preliminary statistics from the MPD. For the month of November, property crime decreased in five of the seven police districts, with significant decreases in the First (-36%), Fourth (-29%), Fifth (-22%), and Seventh Districts (-28%). Violent crime also decreased in five of the seven police districts, with significant decreases in the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Seventh Districts.

Citywide, there have been two fewer Homicides compared to December 5, 2007. Year to date, as of December 1, there has been a five percent decrease in the number of Sexual Assaults. Robberies have remained statistically unchanged and Assaults are down 11 percent. Burglary was down by five percent, and Theft has remained statistically unchanged compared to the same time last year. Thefts from Vehicles increased 15 percent and Arsons were down 15 percent. Compared to the same time last year, property crimes decreased in the Fourth, Fifth and Seventh Districts. Violent crime decreased in six of the seven police districts; it increased in the Sixth District.

- » View the latest preliminary crime statistics for each of the seven police districts and the city as a whole by going to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/prelimdata>
- » In addition to more burglary prevention tips, the MPD offers safety brochures that provide a number of suggestions on how you can reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

FBI WARNS OF HOLIDAY SEASON CYBER-SCAMMERS

The FBI is reminding people this holiday season that cyber criminals continue to aggressively seek ways to steal money and personal information. Scammers are using several techniques to fool potential victims including sending unsolicited e-mails that contain attachments such as electronic greeting cards containing malware (malicious software), setting up spoofing websites that look like legitimate commercial sites, and unleashing phishing and vishing attacks where individuals receive e-mails asking for personal data.

In the greeting card scam, the cards are being sent via email. Like many other Internet fraud schemes, the criminals use social engineering tactics to entice the victim, claiming the card is from a family member or friend. Upon clicking the link, the recipient is unknowingly taken to a malicious webpage.

Spoofing scams are when criminals create a false or shadow copy of a real website or e-mail in a way that misleads the recipient. All network traffic between the victim's browser and the shadow page are sent through the spoofer's machine. This allows the spoofer to acquire personal information, such as passwords, credit card numbers, and account numbers. Even though the e-mail looks like the real thing, complete with authentic logos and working web links, it's a fake; the website where you're told to enter your account information is also fake. The information entered does not go to the legitimate site, but rather to the spoofer's account. The information you entered will most likely be sold to criminals, who'll use it to ruin your credit and drain your account.

In phishing and vishing attacks, individuals receive e-mails or text messages indicating a problem with their account. They are directed to follow the link provided in the message to update their account or correct the problem. The link actually directs the individuals to a fraudulent website that looks legitimate where their personal information, such as account number and PIN, is compromised.

Here are some tips you can use to avoid becoming a victim of cyber fraud:

- Do not respond to unsolicited (spam) email.
- Do not click on links contained within an unsolicited email.
- Be cautious of email claiming to contain pictures in attached files, as the files may contain viruses. Only open attachments from known senders.
- Avoid filling out forms in email messages that ask for personal information.
- Always compare the link in the email to the link that you are actually directed to.
- Log on to the official website, instead of "linking" to it from an unsolicited email.
- Contact the actual business that supposedly sent the email to verify if the email is genuine.

- » Read the FBI's complete release on holiday cyber scams online at:
<http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel08/holidayscams120108.htm>
- » If you have received a scam e-mail, please notify the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) by filing a complaint at:
<http://www.ic3.gov>.
- » For more information on other e-scams, please visit the FBI's New E-Scams and Warnings webpage at:
<http://www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/escams.htm>.
- » The MPD provides a variety of safety tips online at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>.

DATA BOX

Homicides as of 12/5/08

2008: 173
2007: 175
% Change: -1.1%
Closure Rate: 68.2% (118 closures)

Adult Arrests week end. 11/29/08

Arrest Data Not Available

Juvenile Activity week end. 11/29/08

Arrest Data Not Available
Curfew Violators: 91
Truancy Violations: 14

Firearm Recoveries as of 12/2/08

December: 15
2008 Total: 2,395

Traffic Fatalities as of 12/5/08

2008: 38
2007: 51
% Change: -25.5%

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

DC-COPS Christmas Tree Lighting 12/9. Please join MPD and the DC Chapter of Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) for the official lighting of the blue spruce in front of MPD headquarters (300 Indiana Ave., NW) at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, December 9. For more information about the tree lighting, please

call **Sterling Spangler** at 443-286-3088 or email president@dc-cops.org; additional information about DC-COPS is available at <http://www.dc-cops.org/>.

Drug Free Zone in Effect in 6D.

Metropolitan Police are enforcing DC's anti-loitering law in designated areas of PSA 603 in Northeast. Get more information online at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/dfz>.

Donate One Warm Coat. One Warm Coat is dedicated to distributing new or gently used coats, free of charge, directly to local children and adults. Clean, reusable coats and jackets can be dropped off in boxes located at 12 DC government office buildings until Friday, December 12, 2008. All donated coats will be given to the Coalition for the Homeless for distribution. Get more information at <http://cncs.dc.gov/>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, in MPD's Office of Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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