

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWS



Fall 2009

Lakewood Police Department

Vol. 25, Issue 3

A Neighborhood Watch block is a body of concerned and involved neighbors addressing issues that concern the entire community.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The fall Neighborhood Watch meeting will be Monday, October 26, 6:00 p.m. at 445 South Allison Parkway. The topics of the meeting will be personal safety, dispatch, and gangs.

We are fortunate in Lakewood to have a very active Neighborhood Watch program and recently welcomed our 472nd block into the program. That speaks well for the many block captains who have taken the initiative, not only to organize and start a group, but who also are diligent about keeping lists updated, information distributed to their group, and suspicious or unusual activities brought to the attention of the Police Department or other appropriate departments within the City. We appreciate the on-going assistance you provide to help make your community safer.

A special thanks to those block captains who held a National Night Out party in August, and hope that we will have more groups take part in National Night Out in 2010. The first Tuesday of August is always designated as the date for National Night Out.

We do occasionally have a captain resign due to health, a move out of the city, or some other reason, leaving no liaison between the Police Department and that neighborhood. We appreciate the efforts a resigning captain makes in finding a replacement to carry on the activities so the area does not become inactive, and all it takes is a call to the Neighborhood Watch office at 303-987-7105 to update our listings with a new captain's name, address and telephone number. Not only will that help keep our groups active, but it will save us mailing expenses. We don't know of a captain change until a mailing is returned or we receive notification from the resigning captain.

BE ALERT TO TELEPHONE AND E-MAIL SCAMS

Be cautious of phone calls you may receive listing an area code of **809, 284, 876**. The scam works something like this: Your phone rings once or twice and then disconnects the

call or they may leave a message. When the number appears on your caller ID, it appears to be a typical domestic telephone number. When you return the call, you assume you are making a domestic long distance call, but when you dial the three-digit area code plus the number, you are connected to a phone number outside the United States and are charged expensive international call rates, and may be charged for pay-per-call services as well. You don't find out about the higher international call rates until you receive your phone bill. There may be other area codes as well, so we recommend that you check any unfamiliar area codes before returning calls.

Computerized calls are also being made indicating they are calling about your credit card and want to offer you the opportunity to lower your interest rate. We caution you about these calls or any other calls about your credit cards, bank account, mortgage, or any other financial dealing. Unless you placed the call to the company you deal with, don't give any personal information to these callers. It is best to just hang up and don't "press 1" etc., to be transferred for additional information.

The IRS has warned again that on-going bogus e-mails and phone calls are being made leading consumers to believe it is coming from the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS has cautioned that they DO NOT contact individuals by e-mail or telephone. If you should receive such a call, don't share any personal or financial information with the caller.

Phony check scams often involve bogus lottery winnings, government grants, mystery shopping assignments and work-at-home opportunities. Typically the accompanying material instructs recipients to cash the check and then forward a portion of the money to a third party for some legitimate-sounding reason, such as to pay taxes. Weeks later, recipients discover that these were fake checks and their banks have debited their account.

Another version involves a scammer buying something you listed for sale in a classified ad or on the internet and sending you a check for more than the price. Calling it a mistake, the buyer asks you to return the difference. As in other cases, the seller later discovers that the original check was a fake.

IDENTITY THEFT

If you have been one of the many unfortunate individuals victimized by identity theft, you are well aware of the numerous difficulties involved in clearing your financial records. Often the thief goes well beyond just the use of your credit cards, driver's license, or Social Security number, and it may take years before the evidence surfaces.

Following are contact numbers or web sites to help monitor your personal information which may alert you if someone else is using your identity.

Under the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) you are entitled to one free credit report per year from each of the three main credit bureaus. To maintain oversight of your credit reports, get one from each credit bureau, rotating from one bureau to the next, every four months. Go to www.annualcreditreport.com, or call 877-322-8228.

To verify insurance claims made under your name, go to www.choicetrust.com for information on how to obtain a CLUE report.

IntelliScript and MedPoint maintain consumer information such as medical conditions reported on insurance applications, test results from medical underwriting exams, potentially hazardous hobbies and driving records, as well as information about prescription drugs you've used over the last five years, including dosages, refills, and doctors. To obtain a free copy of your reports, call MIB at 866-692-6901, IntelliScript at 877-211-4816, and MedPoint at 888-206-0335.

Chex Systems and TeleCheck collect information on mishandled checking accounts such as overdrawn accounts closed by you or your bank. Both companies are subject to FCRA requirements. To obtain a free copy of your Chex Systems report, go to www.consumerdebit.com then click on "Order Consumer Report." To obtain your free TeleCheck report, go to www.firstdata.com/support/telecheck_home.htm and click on "TeleCheck Consumer Assistance."

Social Security Administration fraud hotline can be reached at 1-800-269-0271 or online at <http://www.ssa.gov>.

Other helpful web sites are:

Backgrounds: www.choicepoint.com or Lexis/Nexis Person reports at www.lexisnexis.com/privacy/for-consumers/request-personal-informatio.aspx

Purchase Returns: www.theretailequation.com/consumers

Rental History: www.fadvsafere.com/consumer_relations/index.php or call 800-815-8664; or

RentBureau at www.rentbureau.com, click on "For Consumers."

To stop unsolicited preapproved credit card offers, call 888-567-8688 or go to www.optoutprescreen.com

To remove your name from mailing lists, go to the Direct Marketing Association's consumer Web site at www.dmchoice.org then click on "Register for eMPS".

When you move, file a temporary change of address, good for six months, with the U.S. Postal Service, then notify those who need it of the new address. Address changes for longer than six months will go into the USPS National Change of Address database.

Don't fill out surveys or warranty cards beyond your name, address and the necessary product information to help prevent your information from being sold or shared.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

In addition to the usual safety tips listed below and on the City's Web page, there will be a child safety program at the Belmar Center on Wednesday, October 28, 3:30-7 p.m. Children and parents are invited to share in the festivities and help their children learn ways to be safe.

- Check that costumes are flame-retardant and keep all costumes away from candles or other fire hazards. Use flashlights or glow sticks instead of candles.

- Be sure costumes fit properly, are not long enough to trip on, do not obscure the child's vision or hearing, and are visible in the dark. Reflective tape works well on most costumes. Makeup works well in place of a mask.
- Encourage children to create costumes that don't need weapons to be scary and fun. Even fake knives, swords, etc. can be dangerous.
- Young children should always be accompanied by an adult.
- Older children should never go alone and a specific time should be established for their return. Know who your older children will be with and where they plan to go trick-or-treating and make it clear that vandalizing property is not acceptable.
- Visit only homes with which you are familiar, and teach the children to eat no treats until they have been thoroughly inspected by an adult at home.
- Take advantage of the many Halloween costume parties, haunted houses, and treat giveaways at local shopping malls, schools, churches, and other public places. This is often more fun than just going door to door and is safer with a wide variety of activities for families.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY

Criminal trespasses to vehicles have remained high throughout the Denver Metro area this year, and holiday time will likely bring even more reported cases. You can help avoid becoming a victim by not leaving valuables in view in your vehicle.

Always put your personal safety first, and don't disregard it while rushing to complete shopping or other errands. Remember to park as close to the building as possible and in a well-lighted area; be alert to others around you; have your keys out and ready before leaving the store so you can quickly enter your vehicle; and shop with someone else whenever possible. It is best not to carry all your credit cards and if possible carry only the cash and cards you will need in a fanny pack worn close to the body. Purses are easily snatched, even those with a sturdy shoulder strap, and never set a purse in a shopping cart while shopping. Keep it attached to you at all times and securely closed so the contents are not visible to another.

Never fall for the plea for assistance from an individual in the parking area (i.e., request for bus fare or help to get their vehicle started, etc.). A good response is, "I will be glad to call the police for you and they will be happy to help you." Usually as quick as you start to use your cell phone, they solve their own dilemma and are quickly on their way.

HAIL DAMAGE REPAIRS

Many residents are still waiting to get roof or gutter repairs or other things damaged by the summer hail storm repaired. Groups known as "travelers" follow storm reports throughout the country scamming innocent citizens with promises to complete home repairs and then skipping out with the money and never completing the work or performing sub-standard work.

We suggest the following preventative steps to help avoid becoming a victim of contractor fraud:

- Beware of door-to-door contractors who use high-pressure tactics.
- Don't do business with someone offering a bargain or who claims to have materials left over from another job in your area.
- Get at least three written bids. Remember, you get what you pay for and the lowest bidder is not always the best.
- Insist that the contractor use a written contract that clearly lists materials, costs and the completion date.
- Be certain the appropriate building permits are obtained and posted.
- Never pay for the job until all work has been satisfactorily completed and inspected.
- Remember – don't allow any stranger into your home. City inspectors do not go door to door. When working with your insurance company, it is a good idea to find out when the adjuster plans to be at your residence, and always ask for identification.

The following telephone numbers may be of assistance in checking complaints against a company you may be considering:

The Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs at 303-222-4444

The Jefferson County Fraud Reporting Line at 303-271-6980

CHARITY FRAUD

Although we have cautioned citizens about this in previous newsletters, this time of year and the state of the economy prompts us to again warn folks about possible charitable scams. Scammers often select a name that closely resembles the name of a respected and well-known charity or reference the local police or fire department in their fund solicitations. This is a reminder that the Lakewood Police Department does not do any solicitation by telephone, mail, or door to door for the charitable programs we conduct. We do accept contributions for these programs directly from the citizens who want to support the programs, however, we never solicit.

Lakewood Police programs accepting public contributions are:

- Christmas Cheer for Children – providing new, unwrapped clothing, toys and food to low-income families with children living in Lakewood
- Caring and Sharing – holiday gifts and food baskets to low-income senior citizens in Lakewood
- Police Athletic League (PAL) Scholarship Program – scholarships offered for one senior from each of the four Lakewood high schools
- Bernie Bernstein Scholarship Program – college scholarships to qualifying Lakewood Police Explorers

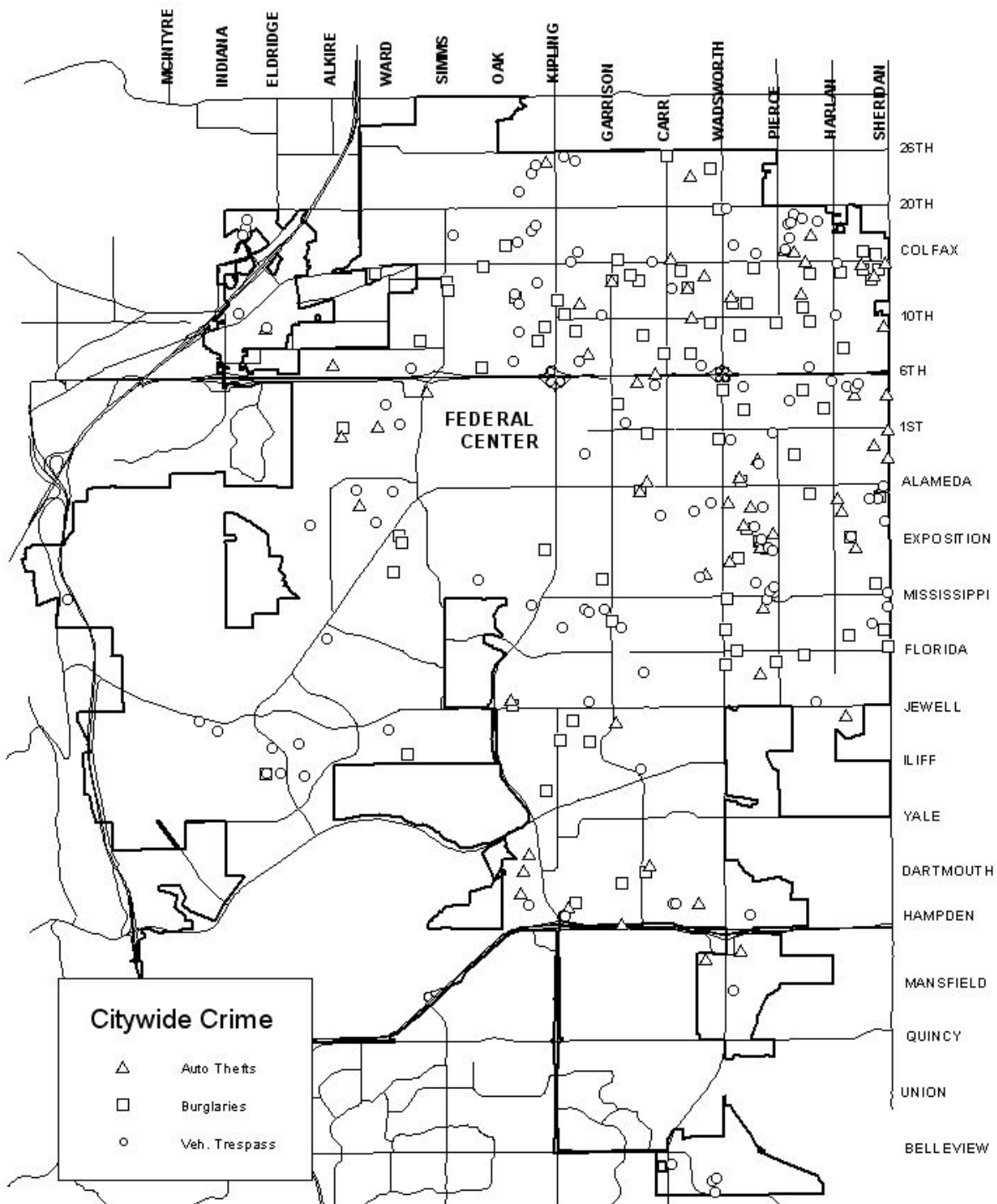
If you should receive solicitation from anyone stating they are collecting funds for any of these programs, please report it to the Police Department at 303-987-7150 or 303-987-7111.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The phone number for the Police Department given out by many of the 411 operators is incorrect. The non-emergency number for the Police Department is **303-987-7111**. It will always be handy if you put it on a small label on or next to your phone, or program it into your phone for quick and easy access.
- Now is a good time to "refresh" your emergency kit to be sure it contains the items your family would need in an emergency and to be certain medications, etc., are not expired.
- Inventory sheets are available at the Police Department and the holiday season is an ideal time to update your inventory sheet with serial numbers of new purchases and gifts.
- Bicycles can be registered easily with the National Bike Registry at www.nationalbikeregistry.com or by calling 1-800-848-2453.
- Bears and other wildlife are attracted to sweet items such as pop, honey, jam, and fruit-type items in the trash. Cans and bottles should be thoroughly washed before putting them in a trash can. Cat and dog food should never be left outside as these also attract skunks, raccoons, etc.
- No more than two unlicensed/inoperable vehicles per residence are allowed and they must be parked in the side or rear yard, screened from public view by means of a solid fence or fitted car cover. Car covers must be maintained at all times and cannot be ripped, torn, or blowing.
- Fall is the ideal time to help eradicate some of the noxious weeds that spread seeds freely in the wind and soon take over yards. Some that are common in this area and are listed on the Jefferson County noxious weed list requiring eradication and control are: Myrtle spurge, Purple loosestrife, Canada thistle, Leafy spurge, Musk thistle, Scotch thistle, and Yellow toadflax. For a complete list, visit <http://jeffco.us> and select Weed and Pest Management.
- Election Day is November 3, 2009. For questions regarding voter registration or other election-related questions, contact the City Clerk's Office at 303-987-7080.
- It is illegal to use a license plate on a vehicle to which it is not registered. If you are transferring the plate from one vehicle to another, please remember to complete the transfer of plates with the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- The fine in Lakewood for parking in a space reserved for the disabled without a valid placard is currently \$115. If you are qualified for a placard but do not have one, an application form can be downloaded from the Department of Motor Vehicles Web page. A doctor's signature is required on the form which can then be taken to a local DMV office to obtain a placard. There is no charge for the placard but the placard must be returned to DMV when no longer needed and cannot be used by other family members.
- Carbon monoxide dangers increase during the winter months when furnaces, water heaters, and fireplaces are used more often. Carbon monoxide detectors are inexpensive and available at local hardware stores.
- Daylight savings time ends Sunday, November 1. Just a reminder that this is a good time to check the batteries in smoke detectors throughout the home as well as flashlights you might need in the event of a power failure.
- All family members should be familiar with the location of and instructions on how to turn off the main water, electric and gas lines for your home in case of emergency.

SOME HELPFUL WEBSITES and PHONE NUMBERS
(Clip and save for reference)

EMERGENCY	9-1-1
Police Non-Emergency	303-987-7111
Police Front Desk	303-987-7150
Explorer Program	303-987-7396
Fingerprint Information	303-987-7022
Graffiti – to report	303-987-7150 or www.lakewood.org
Investigation Div./Property Crimes (theft, ID theft, burglary, criminal mischief, auto theft)	303-987-7301
Invest. Div. (fraud message line)	303-987-7270
Jefferson County Jail	303-277-0211
Juvenile Assessment Center	720-497-7770
Municipal Court	303-987-7400
Neighborhood Watch	303-987-7105 or 303-987-7398 (voice mail)
Neighborhood Watch News	www.lakewood.org
Police Records	303-987-7331
Property – to report found property	303-987-7111
Property – to claim property	303-987-7320
Speaker's Bureau	303-987-7170
Violations Bureau	303-987-7465
Volunteering	303-987-7105
OTHER CITY of LAKEWOOD PHONE NUMBERS	
City's Main Switchboard	303-987-7000
City Clerk's Office	303-987-7080
Mayor & City Council	303-987-7040
Job Line – City of Lakewood	303-987-7777
Cultural Center Tickets	303-987-7845
Picnic Shelters in Parks	303-987-7800
Potholes – reporting	303-987-7950
Road Construction Concerns	303-987-7980
Sidewalks – un-shoveled walks	303-987-7500
Streetlights – report burned out	303-987-7980 or Xcel Energy at http://www1.xcelenergy.com/ODL/OUTAGEREPORT
Traffic Signal Concerns	303-987-7980
Voter Registration	303-987-7080
Water & Sewer Bills	303-987-7615
Weeds & Junk	303-987-7566
West Metro Fire Department	303-989-4307
CSP Road Conditions	303-639-1111 or www. COTRIP.com
Electric Emergency	1-800-895-1999 Xcel Energy
Gas emergency/gas odor	1-800-895-2999 Xcel Energy
Poison Control Center	1-800-222-1222



**Lakewood Auto Thefts, Burglaries & Vehicle Trespass
August 2009**

**Lakewood Neighborhood Watch
Burglary, Auto Theft, and Vehicle Trespass Data Summary - 2009**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
BURGLARIES													
Total in City	66	61	66	89	76	82	71	91					602
Cases in Watch Area	3	8	4	8	13	5	12	14					67
Percentage Occurring In Watch Areas	5%	13%	6%	9%	17%	6%	17%	15%					11%
AUTO THEFTS													
Total in City	55	50	52	48	47	70	54	67					443
Cases in Watch Area	5	8	9	4	1	10	2	8					47
Percentage Occurring In Watch Areas	9%	16%	17%	8%	2%	14%	4%	12%					11%
VEHICLE TRESPASS													
Total in City	125	74	113	72	126	144	122	131					907
Cases in Watch Area	19	12	10	6	22	16	15	15					115
Percentage Occurring In Watch Areas	15%	16%	9%	8%	17%	11%	12%	11%					13%

NOTE: Burglaries include 3rd degree burglaries and possession of burglary tools.

