



Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

Bob Fletcher, Sheriff

Public Safety Services Division – Crime Prevention Unit

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www.RamseyCountySheriff.us

Neighbors and Deputies working together for safer communities



Neighborhood Newsletter – January 2025

Next Block Captain Meeting – Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025, at 6:30 pm

Ramsey County Public Works Building - Marsden Room
1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills MN 55112

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2025 Block Captain Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, January 21st, 2025, at 6:30 pm

Tuesday, April 22nd, 2025, at 6:30 pm

Tuesday, July 29th, 2025, at 6:30 pm (*also Night to Unite Bag Pickup*)

Tuesday, October 21st, 2025, at 6:30 pm



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS. ONE CUP AT A TIME.

Join your neighbors
and deputies for coffee
and conversation.

City	Business	Address	Date	Time
SV	Starbucks/Kowalski's	441 Hwy 96 W, Shoreview, MN 55126	1/29/2025	8:00am-9:30am
AH	Caribou Coffee	3673 Lexington Ave N, Arden Hills, MN 55126	2/7/2025	8:00am-9:30am
NO	Caribou Coffee	113 Village Center Dr, North Oaks, MN 55127	2/14/2025	8:00am-9:30am
VH	Starbucks	1016 Hwy 96 E, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127	2/28/2025	8:00am-9:30am

Distracted Driving

Over the last 4 years the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office has been invited to speak at the White Bear Lake Girls Varsity Basketball Game to bring awareness to Distracted Driving during a home game. The team members make a pledge to not drive distracted while encouraging others in their community to do the same. This year Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, White Bear Lake Police Department, and the MN State Patrol will be at the Feb 14th game to help spread this message to our community. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has additional information and encourages all drivers to take the pledge to not drive distracted.

The Office of Traffic Safety follows Distracted Driving data as one of the behavioral factors involved in fatal crashes. From January 1st, 2024 to December 22nd, 2024 there has been 27 crashes that resulted in a fatality in the state of Minnesota where Distracted Driving was a contributing factor. Distracted Driving contributes to one in four crashes in Minnesota each year but that is only what documented. The National Safety Council says that "At 55 mph, a 4-second text takes your eyes off the road while you travel the full length of a football field." So, in just one text message you may travel 120yards or 360ft.

Drivers using their cell phone see significantly less of their driving environment



True for both handheld
and hands-free use.



Distracted Driving is more than just the typical texting or using your phone. It is also:

- Visual — looking away from the road, looking around the vehicle for a dropped item, etc.
- Mechanical/Physical — taking hands off the wheel: manipulation of controls, eating, reaching for something in the vehicle, etc.
- Cognitive — being "lost in thought," or focusing on a conversation, resulting in withdrawing from situational awareness.
- Combination of the above — using your GPS or texting while driving (both use visual, mechanical, and cognitive)

Trying to make an impact in Teen Distracted Driving is important due to the high amount of technology use in teens. A recent story posted in MNCrime.com of a 17-year-old who crashed into a school bus full of kids, is just one of many sad stories where Distracted Driving has dramatically impacted lives. The article states, "Investigators later executed a search warrant on her phone, which revealed she had taken a Snapchat screenshot at 7:48 a.m.—seconds before a 911 call reporting the

crash. Data retrieved from her vehicle showed pre-crash speeds of 48 to 53 mph, with no evidence of braking before impact.” The teen is now facing 24 criminal charges. [Teen Driver Faces 24 Criminal Counts in Hibbing School Bus Crash](#)

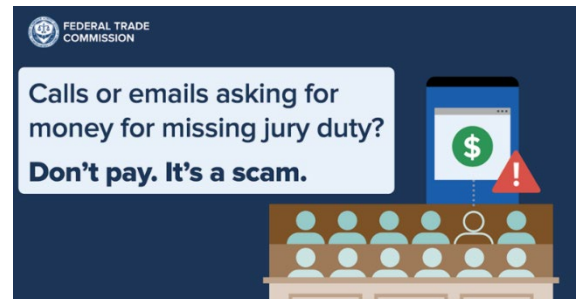
If you are looking to change a bad habit going into the new year, please consider putting down your phone and paying attention to the roads. This one action is not only for others in your community, but for **your safety!**

[National Highway Traffic Safety Administration- Distracted Driving](#)

Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office Scam Impersonators are here again!

Last year in the January 2024 Block Captain Newsletter this article was written to give warning to the community of scammers impersonating Ramsey County Sheriff’s Deputies. In the last month, the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office has received many calls from community members to make reports or inquiring about scammers calling them using Deputies names. The scammers are using real Deputies names, badge numbers, phone numbers, and other office information when making scamming calls to sound official and legitimate. The scammers are claiming the victim missed jury, has a subpoena, warrant for failure to appear in court, etc. All the scammers then demand payment in an unconventional way and say that if you don’t pay, you will go to jail immediately (use threats and intimidation). We have community members losing 5 to over 40 thousand dollars.

So how do you determine if the person on the phone is a scammer or law enforcement? First, law enforcement WILL NOT contact community members by telephone to “DEMAND” any form of payment or request any “personal or sensitive information.” If there is any legal action by Ramsey County it will be done in person by a uniformed law enforcement officer, such as, the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office Civil Unit who serves all of Ramsey County’s legal papers.



The Federal Trade Commission recommends these tips to avoid government scam:

- Don’t ever wire money or use gift cards, cryptocurrency, or payment app to pay someone who says they work for the government.
- Don’t give your financial or personal information to someone who calls, texts, emails, or messages you on social media and says they’re with the government.
- Don’t trust your caller ID.
- Don’t click on links in unexpected emails, texts, or social media messages.

If you do send money, give personal information, call the local law enforcement agency to file a report. If you have general questions, you can call the Crime Prevention line at 651-266-7339. For more information read the FTC.gov articles:

[Did you get a call or email saying you missed jury duty and need to pay? It’s a scam](#)

[How to Avoid a Government Impersonation Scam](#)

[Phone Scams](#)

Searching for love or companionship?

February is often a time our attention is drawn to romance especially with Valentine's Day on the 14th. Unfortunately, online romance scams are among the most reported scams, with losses reaching a record \$547 million in 2022. While millions of people are successfully using online dating apps or social networking sites to meet someone, there are many scammers hiding behind false profiles trolling for the unsuspecting to trick into sending money or personal information. Red flags include professing love quickly; claims to be overseas in military, doctors, or businessmen; asks for money; lures you off the dating site; plans to visit in person *but can't because of an emergency*; etc. Bottom line is slow down and talk to someone you trust in person and never send money or fight to a sweetheart you HAVEN'T MET IN PERSON.



More information:

[What to Know About Romance Scams](#)

[FBI: Romance Scam](#)

[No love for romance scammers in 2024](#)

Minnesota winter driving

With Minnesota winter here and the worst yet to come in the next few months, remember to prepare and stay safe on the roadways. No matter where you are headed, give yourself extra time to travel and drive the speeds that are safe for the road conditions. Give the plows space and room so you don't get hit, run or slide off the road, or get a cracked windshield. If you have icy or snow piled windows, clear them off and give your vehicle time to warm up. Whether you have an automatic start or an old-fashioned key start, dress for the weather when getting into your vehicle and give it ample time to warm up before driving on the roads.

Have a basic winter survival kit in each of your vehicles and ready to go in case of any cold or snow emergency that comes up this winter. For more information visit dps.mn.gov- [Start thinking about safer winter driving as flurries hit MN](#)



Home Safety – Portable Heaters



Per the [National Fire Prevention Association](#) (NFPA), “nearly half of the heating equipment fires (46%) occurred in the three-month period from December through February.” They also report “space heaters and heating stoves were the type of heating equipment responsible for the largest shares of losses in home heating equipment fires.”

Portable heaters maybe an easy and quick fix for heat but they are not meant to heat your home. If the furnace starts to fail or heat is not making its way to every room, people use the electric portable heaters to supplement heat. Here are a few safety tips to consider with portable heaters from NFPA:

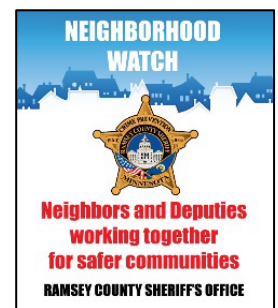
- Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off if it tips over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Keep children away from the space heater.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

Neighborhood Watch is about Neighbors and Deputies working together

Involved neighbors are more likely to have open communication lines with each other, deputies, and the whole community. When neighbors know each other’s names, normal patterns, and look out for each other, it is likely that they will report any activity that doesn’t fit with regular schedules. Involved neighbors look out for each other.

Neighborhood Watch program [information and forms](#) to help your block organization are available on the county [website](#). **Please complete and return** the [Block Captain registration form](#) to ensure the Sheriff’s Office has your most current contact information. THANKS!

Online information of activity in your neighborhood – [CommunityCrimeMap.com](#)



Thank you for working for safer neighborhoods!



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Remember – when you See Something, Say Something, Call 9-1-1