



## Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

Jack Serier, Sheriff

## Neighborhood Watch

### Public Safety Services Division – Crime Prevention Unit

1411 Paul Kirkwold Drive • Arden Hills, Minnesota 55112

Phone: 651-266-7339 • Fax: 651-266-7306

www.RamseyCountySheriff.us

Neighbors and Deputies working together for safer communities

## Block Captain News – March 2018

Next Meeting Tuesday, May 1 – 6:30 pm

Ramsey County Public Works Building - Marsden Room  
1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills MN 55112  
Near intersection of Highway 96 and Hamline

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### Consumer Protection Week – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Federal Trade Commission and its partners across the country will participate in the 20th anniversary of National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW), held March 4-10, 2018.

NCPW is a nationally coordinated campaign to help consumers understand their consumer rights and make well-informed decisions about money and learn how to spot scams ([video link](#)).

Since its creation, the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection has focused agency resources and national experts on safeguarding Americans from identity theft, protecting their financial records, and addressing other key consumer protection issues. In addition, FTC's Bureau of Competition supports consumers by promoting competition in the marketplace, which can deliver lower prices, enhance innovation, and increase quality and choice for consumers.

This year, the FTC will continue the campaign with a series of Facebook Live events with its NCPW partners throughout the week. Topics of discussion include identity theft, imposter scams, the Consumer Sentinel Network Data Book and how to avoid fraud. ([link to schedule](#))

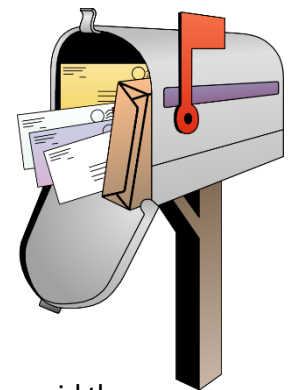
### déjà vu – Mail theft red flags

It's still happening. The red flags are up and thieves are grabbing the outgoing mail before the local postal carrier can. The thieves then grab the checks, wash the ink away, write them to themselves and attempt to cash them at the bank.

The mail thieves will also use the information gained to steal identities and use the good name and credit of others for their illegal activities.

Mail theft reports seem to be on the rise again, so please remember to place outgoing mail into secure USPS mail receptacles or hand them directly to a postal carrier.

Remind your family and neighbors of this simple prevention tip to avoid the pain of mail theft. See the preventing mail theft brochure [online](#) for more information.



## Tips for improving your Cyber Security

The news this year has included computer hardware-based security vulnerabilities and has highlighted the importance of monitoring your personal cyber security. With a wide range of personal, financial and medical information stored online, taking time to strengthen your family's online security could save you time, money and aggravation. Here are some basic tips from StaySafeOnline.org and IDShield that will provide peace of mind and help reduce risk.

**1. Protect Your Network** – Failing to protect your home wireless network is like leaving your door wide open. [Password protecting](#) your network is a good place to start, but there are other steps you must take to truly protect your network. You should also change your security defaults and set up a firewall. [Click here to learn more](#) about how to secure your home network.



**2. Protect Your Computer** – It is critical to update your computer's operating system and other software. Developers frequently push out patches to protect against newly discovered security threats but if you don't update your machine will not take advantage of these protections. In addition, utilize antivirus software to protect your computer from viruses, malware and spyware. Update your antivirus software frequently. Be cautious when downloading email attachments. Many spam or fraudulent email attachments contain malicious software. You should also fully shutdown your computer when not in use for extended periods.

**3. Protect Your Cellphone** – Current smartphones are more powerful than many home computers were ten years ago. It is important to take similar precautions to protect your cellphone and your private data. This includes locking your phone when not in use, as well as using strong passwords and encryption.

**4. Protect Your Children** – Child predators and scammers target children on social networks, gaming sites, message boards and via email. It is important to begin teaching children about online safety early but you should also keep an open dialogue with older children and teens. The National Children's Advocacy Center offers helpful tips on teaching your children about online safety. ([weblink](#))

**5. Disable GPS Tagging** – Most smart phones and many newer digital cameras use GPS to tag your pictures with the exact location where they were taken. When shared publicly, this information can be used by predators to locate your child within a few feet. An album full of tagged pictures can provide a map of locations where your child might be vulnerable. The best way to avoid this danger is to disable GPS tagging on your smart phone or camera. Check your settings or contact your cell phone provider for assistance if you are unsure how to do so.

**6. Protect Your Wallet** – Each year hundreds of thousands of people fall victim to online scams. Familiarizing yourself with common schemes will help protect you and your family. The best rule of thumb to follow is that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. You can read more about online scams at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/scam-alerts>.

## Distracted driving enforcement enhanced April 9-22, 2018

The recent crash on Highway 36 near Stillwater brought attention to a very real traffic safety problem – distracted driving. The Ramsey County Traffic Safety Initiative, which all police agencies in the county are participants, will be focusing enforcement efforts on this dangerous driving behavior in April.

Each year in Minnesota, distracted or inattentive driving is a factor in one in four crashes, resulting in at least 70 deaths and 350 serious injuries. The Office of Traffic Safety estimates that these numbers are vastly underreported due to law enforcement's challenge in determining distraction as a crash factor. Be part of the solution – [tips from MN traffic safety website](#).



## Walk & Bike to School Day – Wednesday, May 9



Many of our local schools will be participating in Walk & Bike to School Day on Wednesday, May 9. While we must be aware of kids walking and biking every day, please know that on this day there will be many more kids on the streets making a healthy trek to their classrooms. Sheriff's Office Deputies, Reserves, and Community Affairs Officers will be on hand directing traffic in some of the communities.

Spring in Minnesota will also find more people out and about, so more attention will need to be paid to bike and pedestrian safety. With bicycles and motor vehicles sharing the road it is important to remember that bicyclists and motorists are equally responsible for bicycle safety.

The number-one factor contributing to bicycle-vehicle collisions is failure to yield the right-of-way — by bicyclists and drivers alike. About one-half of all bicycle-vehicle collisions are due to a variety of bicyclist behaviors, such as disregarding a traffic sign or signal. The other half are caused by vehicle driver behaviors, such as inattention and distraction.

The Sheriff's Office will be conducting a **Bike Rodeo on Thursday, June 14, 2018**, at Island Lake County Park, 3611 North Victoria Street, Shoreview. The event will run from 8:00 am to 11:00 am, and is open to all Ramsey County residents. This Bike Rodeo will have four components, including equipment check, safety instruction, rules of the road, and an obstacle skills course. It will take about 45-60 minutes to complete all the training, and sessions will start on the hour. Bike rodeos are geared toward children, however adult riders are welcome to participate in the training too. Advance registration is appreciated, and can be done online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BikeRodeo2018>, or by calling 651-266-7332.

## Hot Dog with a Deputy 2018

Hot Dog with a Deputy returns this summer to build community relations with the citizens we serve. On Tuesday evenings, beginning in June, bring the family out to the park for free hot dogs, equipment demonstrations, and conversation with deputies. "Hot Dog with a Deputy" will take place from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on the following nights:

- Tue, 6/5, Island Lake Park, 3691 Victoria St, Shoreview
- Tue, 6/12, Polar Lakes Park, 1280 Hammond Rd, White Bear Township
- Tue, 6/19, Berwood Park, 780 Berwood Ave, Vadnais Heights
- Tue, 6/26, Pioneer Park, 2950 Centerville Rd, Little Canada
- Tue, 7/10, Tony Schmidt Park, 3500 Lake Johanna Blvd, Arden Hills
- Tue, 7/17, West Rec Center, 14 West Pleasant Lake Rd, North Oaks
- Thur, 7/19, Community Park, 2050 Roselawn Ave W, Falcon Heights
- Wed, 7/25, Commons Pavilion, 4580 Victoria St, Shoreview



Staff and equipment at these events could include Patrol Deputies, K-9, Water Patrol, SWAT, Mobile Field Force, Reserve Deputies, Mounted Unit and volunteers dependent upon availability.



## Coffee with a Cop – Thurs, March 29 & Tues, April 24

Continuing the community engagement experience of Night to Unite and Hot Dog with a Deputy, the Sheriff's Office Public Safety Services Division will be holding a Coffee with a Cop event in March.



The goal of a Coffee with a Cop event is to bring neighbors and deputies together in an informal, neutral space to chat. No speeches or agenda – just conversation.

### Coffee with a Cop scheduled for:

**Thursday, March 29 from 5:30-7 pm** at the Community Room of Falcon Heights Town Square Apartments, 1550 Larpenteur Ave W, Falcon Heights

**Tuesday, April 24 from 8-9:30 am** at the Caribou Coffee at 113 Village Centre Drive, North Oaks (near Hwy 96 & Hodgson)



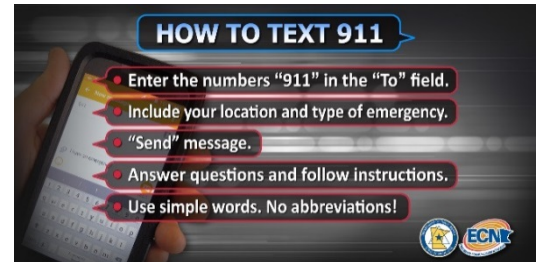
## Text-to-911 available statewide



In Ramsey County, and throughout Minnesota, Text-to-911 is an alternative option to calling 911 in an emergency. Texting should ONLY be used when individuals are unable to make a voice call. Individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or speech impaired may use Text-to-911 as a first contact option.

### When Should Text-to-911 be Used?

- The reporting party cannot speak while a crime is in progress.
- The reporting party must remain quiet to stay safe.
- If speaking may cause harm, such as in a home invasion, domestic violence, or human trafficking situation.
- If the reporting party encounters a suicidal or agitated person.
- If peer pressure is strong.
- If the reporting party is deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or has a speech impairment.



[More information from Minnesota Department of Public Safety](#)

## Mark your calendars for 2018 Block Captain events:

**Tuesday, May 1** – 6:30 pm – Captains Meeting, 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills

**Wednesday, August 1** – 6:00 pm – Night to Unite Hosts / Captains Appreciation Dinner

**Tuesday, August 7** – Night to Unite events in neighborhoods throughout the community

**Tuesday, November 13** – 6:30 pm – Captains Meeting, 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills

### Thank you for working for safer neighborhoods!



Deputy Mike Servatka  
Crime Prevention Specialist  
651-266-7339

Randy Gustafson  
Public Communications Coordinator  
651-266-7315

email address: [CrimePrevention@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:CrimePrevention@co.ramsey.mn.us)

website: [www.RamseyCountySheriff.us](http://www.RamseyCountySheriff.us)

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