



## Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

Bob Fletcher, Sheriff

## Neighborhood Watch

### Public Safety Services Division – Crime Prevention Unit

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

Neighbors and Deputies working together for safer communities

## Block Captain News – November 2019

**Next Meeting Tuesday, November 12 – 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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### Coffee with a Cop – Tuesday, Nov 5, 8-9:30 am

Join local deputies for coffee and conversation



**taste**® bakery & café  
OF SCANDINAVIA

**Taste of Scandinavia Bakery & Café – Little Canada, MN 55113**

**2900 Rice Street** (Marketplace Center, Suite #100)

**8:00 am – 9:30 am – Tuesday, November 5, 2019**

### Winter Driving & Motor Vehicle Thefts

Tis the season for snow, cold, bad roads, and thieves driving off in vehicles left running unattended with the keys in the ignition.

Here's a few quick winter driving safety reminders:

- Under Minnesota law, it is illegal to leave the car unattended and running with the keys in the ignition. But, if you have a remote starter installed, you can start your car without putting the keys in the ignition.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Clear all snow and ice from windshield and all windows before driving.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
- Never mix radial tires with other tire types.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).
- Always look and steer where you want to go.
- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.
- Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can. Don't tempt fate: If you don't have somewhere you have to be, watch the snow from indoors.

Resources for winter driving tips: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/winter/>; <https://www.nhtsa.gov/winter-driving-tips>; <http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/driving-advice/winter-driving-tips/#.WlY5s03ruUk>

## **Holiday Safety – Package Theft Prevention**

- Ask a trustworthy neighbor to watch for and retrieve your package when it is delivered.
- Request “signature required” service from the delivery company.
- Place a storage container, such as a large Rubbermaid, on your stoop for packages to be placed in so they are not readily seen by people driving by.
- Place a note on front door asking delivery driver to leave packages on the back steps.
- Have packages delivered to your work or a business address if possible.
- Deposit outgoing mail in official USPS drop boxes.

## **Phishing Alert – Fraudulent Shipping Notifications**

Phishing is the fraudulent practice of sending emails purporting to be from reputable companies in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers.

Security organizations have reported that in September and October cybercriminals have been increasing their use of fraudulent shipping notifications to spread malware and steal login credentials and/or money with expectations that these attacks are likely to increase during the holiday season. These malicious shipping alerts—which mimic messages from familiar companies like UPS, FedEx, DHL, and USPS—are being seen across a variety of industries and individual consumers. Because organizations and consumers frequently receive valid shipping alerts, it is important for all end users to be vigilant and look carefully at all messages and spot malicious messages that imitate well-known brands.

## **FTC Consumer Fraud Survey – nearly 1 in 6 a victim of fraud in 2017**

The Federal Trade Commission has released the results of a comprehensive survey conducted in 2017 that examined the prevalence of mass-market consumer fraud, how it is perpetrated, and what factors are associated with a greater likelihood that a consumer may fall victim to fraud. The FTC conducted similar surveys in 2003, 2005, and 2011.

The survey results show that 15.9 percent of the respondents were victims of fraud in 2017, which represents approximately 40 million U.S. adults.

The most common types of fraud reported by the survey respondents were fraudulent weight-loss products, fraudulent computer repairs, and being falsely told that they owed money to the government. Other commonly reported types of fraud included unauthorized billing for buying club memberships, unauthorized billing for an item for a cell phone, and fraudulent prize promotions. The survey results indicate that each of these types of fraud had more than two million U.S. adult victims.

Internet transactions, which continue to grow, accounted for a substantial share of fraudulent incidents. According to the survey, 54 percent of all incidents of fraud involved Internet promotion of products and services, up from 33 percent in the 2011 survey.

The survey results indicate that consumers aged 35 to 54 were more likely to be victims of fraud compared to consumers in other age categories. According to the survey, 22 percent of respondents between 35 and 44, and 20 percent of respondents between 45 and 54, were victims of fraud. The survey also found that women were more likely to be fraud victims than men, with 19 percent of women reporting that they were victims of fraud, compared to 13 percent for men.

The survey results indicate that people who were more willing to take risks, and those who had recently experienced a negative life event (such as a severe illness or the death of a loved one), were more likely to have been fraud victims. Those experiencing high levels of debt and those who predicted that their incomes would rise substantially in the next few years were also more likely to have been fraud victims.

[full report](https://www.ftc.gov/reports/mass-market-consumer-fraud-united-states-2017-update): <https://www.ftc.gov/reports/mass-market-consumer-fraud-united-states-2017-update>

## Cybersecurity - What you can do to fend off hackers

Your personal information is valuable. That's why hackers try to steal it. This year, for National Cyber Security Awareness Month, Alvaro Puig, FTC Consumer Education Specialist, shared tips to help you keep your personal information from ending up in the hands of a hacker.



### Protect your phone

- Start with protecting the data on your phone. Set your phone to lock automatically and create a passcode to unlock it. Use at least a 6-digit passcode.
- When you notice an update for your phone is available, run it promptly. Those updates could include critical security patches.
- Back up your phone regularly. That way, if you lose it, you'll still have access to your personal information.
- Use an app that will help you find your phone if you lose it – or if someone steals it. If it's the latter, you can use the app to remotely lock your phone or erase the data on it.

### Protect your computer

To protect your computer from threats like malware, use security software and update it regularly or set it to update automatically.

### Protect your accounts

To protect your accounts, use strong passwords. Consider using multi-factor authentication for accounts that offer it. (If you're trying to enable multi-factor authentication on your account, it might be called two-factor authentication or two-step verification.)

### Connect safely

Know what makes a wireless network secure. Start with your own wireless network and router. Then find out how to use public Wi-Fi safely.

### Keep your info to yourself

Another way to protect your personal information is to recognize scammers' attempts to steal it. Phishing attacks by email or text may try to trick you into giving up your passwords, account numbers, or other personal information. Or callers might lie about your Social Security number being suspended and urge you to contact them.

Full article with links: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2019/10/what-you-can-do-fend-hackers>

## Safety reminders for the Holiday Season.

Nothing can ruin the holiday spirit faster than becoming a victim of crime. Unfortunately, the holiday season is a time of opportunity for thieves to burglarize your home for cash, credit cards and gifts.

### Prevent theft from your vehicle:

- Don't leave valuables in your vehicle.
- Always lock your car, and park in a well-lit and well-traveled area.
- When running errands, shopping, or traveling, make an extra stop before arriving at your destination to lock valuables in your trunk.
- If you must leave personal property in your vehicle, make sure it is out of view.
- Be aware in parking lots. Have your keys in hand when approaching your vehicle, ready to unlock the door.

### Financial card and online shopping considerations:

- If you go to an automatic teller machine for cash, check for people around and make sure it is well-lit and in a safe location.
- Carry only the credit cards you need and avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Keep your personal information private and your password secure. Do not respond to requests to verify your password or credit card information unless you initiated the contact. Legitimate businesses will not contact you in this manner.

## Sheriff's Office Citizen Academy scheduled for 2020

The Ramsey County Sheriff's Office is hosting a Citizen Academy in January and February 2020. This eight-session course will take participants on a behind the scenes journey of the work and activities of the Sheriff's Office. The course will begin Wednesday, January 8 and continue through Wednesday, February 26, 2020. Sessions will run each Wednesday for three hours per night, from 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM.

The course is designed to give citizens a better understanding of the duties, responsibilities, equipment, training and facilities of the Sheriff's Office. Topics include patrol procedures, K-9, criminal investigations, crime scene processing, narcotics, crime prevention and the communication center (911 system). The academy will also include the topics of court orders, civil process, criminal history, and warrants. In addition to classroom training, participants will receive tours of the patrol station, the adult detention center (jail), County Courthouse, Law Enforcement Center, and other Sheriff's Office facilities.

There is no fee, the only commitment is that participants are asked to attend all sessions. At the conclusion of the academy, graduates will receive a certificate of completion. Participants will also be offered volunteer opportunities to continue their partnership with law enforcement.

Applicants must be 18 years of age, pass a criminal history background check, and be available to attend all of the sessions. Academy size is limited.

[Download the application](#) (pdf fillable form). To request an application via email send your request to [CrimePrevention@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:CrimePrevention@co.ramsey.mn.us) Via US Mail or for additional information, call 651-266-7315.

Applications must be received by Tuesday, December 17, 2019.

## 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.

Information sharing on crime prevention, crime trends, and law enforcement issues is a key element to the Neighborhood Watch program of the Sheriff's Office.

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!



### Mark your calendars for 2019 events:

**Tuesday, November 12** – 6:30 pm – Captains Meeting, 1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive, Arden Hills

**Thank you for working for safer neighborhoods!**



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