



Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

Bob Fletcher, Sheriff

Neighborhood Watch

Public Safety Services Division – Crime Prevention Unit

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Block Captain News – July 2020

NEW DATE for Night to Unite – Tuesday, October 6, 2020

COVID-19 pandemic prompts change of date for nationwide event celebrating community

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- Vehicle thefts
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For over thirty years communities across America have gathered for an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie. The first Tuesday in August was the date for millions of neighbors in 49 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide, (Texas and some select areas celebrated on the first Tuesday in October).

With the COVID-19 pandemic discouraging large gatherings for the near future, the Sheriff's Office is joining other member agencies of the Minnesota Crime Prevention Association and rescheduling the 2020 Night to Unite / National Night Out date to Tuesday, October 6, 2020.



In the coming weeks plans will be made on how our communities will celebrate Night to Unite. Look for more information as it becomes available.

PREVENTING THE THEFT
of your vehicle and its contents

1. Never leave your car running unsupervised
2. Always lock your doors
3. Park in safe and well-lit areas
4. Not leave items visible
5. Never attach name or address to your key chain
6. Not hide spare keys inside or outside your vehicle
7. Have a tracking or anti-theft system installed

Unlocked vehicles are easy targets for thieves

Thieves continue to find easy pickings in several of our neighborhoods this summer. Common theme in the reports are unlocked cars with valuables left inside parked on the street or driveway.

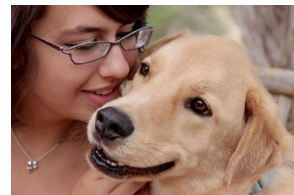
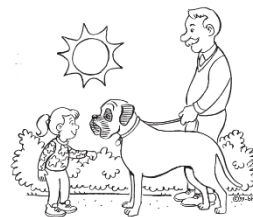
Even if you are parked in front of your house, in your driveway or inside your garage, lock your doors. Criminals like to walk down the street and see if a car is unlocked, if it is, they open the door and take whatever is visible and move on to the next target. However, if the door is locked, they are more likely to move on.

Reminder: Don't leave any valuables in your vehicle.

Tips for kids to avoid dog bites

With more families staying at home or getting outdoors for some fresh air, the Ramsey County Sheriff Office has noticed a slight increase in dog attacks, especially involving children. Here are a few tips and resources to share with our younger persons to help avoid being bit by a dog.

- Always ask the owner if it is okay to pet the dog
- Let the dog see and sniff you before petting it
- When visiting a friend's home that has a dog...
 - Parent call in advance to notify the dog owners that your child will be visiting
 - From the street or road, make noise or yell out to your friend AND WAIT A MOMENT TO SEE IF A DOG COMES OUT OR BARKS before stepping on her/his property
 - Knock, yell out, and WAIT A MOMENT TO SEE IF A DOG BARKS OR COMES OUT before opening a gate to a fence.
- If you see a dog that is not on a leash...
 - DO NOT RUN OR TURN YOUR BACK TO THE DOG.
 - Do stand still with your hands to your sides if the loose dog approaches you...let it sniff you
 - If the loose dog does not approach,
 - tell the dog to go home
 - back away slowly
 - and when safely away yell for help
- Keep your face away from the head of an unfamiliar dog (do not try to kiss it)
- Parents, never leave baby or tiny tots alone with a dog
- Make sure kids understand to never poke, pull, hit, jump on, or try to ride a dog like a horse.
- Move further away from persons walking their dogs, especially if you are on bike, jogging, or skating.



Below are some helpful links to additional resources for tips on dog bite prevention for children.

<https://resources.bestfriends.org/article/dog-safety-staying-safe-around-dogs>

<https://images.akc.org/pdf/PBSAF2.pdf>

<https://www.avma.org/about/dog-bite-prevention.aspx/teaching-children-how-prevent-dog-bites>

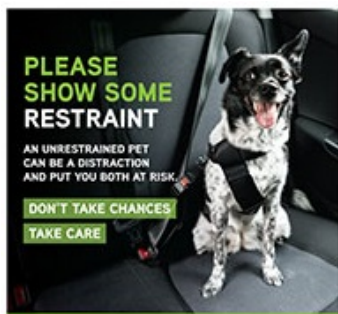
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/dog-bites.html>

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2020/05/finding-furry-friend-era-covid-19>

Hot Cars and Pets

Warm weather can literally be a killer for a dog left inside a car. On warm days the inside of a car heats up very quickly. When it's 85 degrees out, the temperature inside a car – even with the windows left slightly open – can soar to 102 degrees in 10 minutes, and reach 120 in just half an hour.

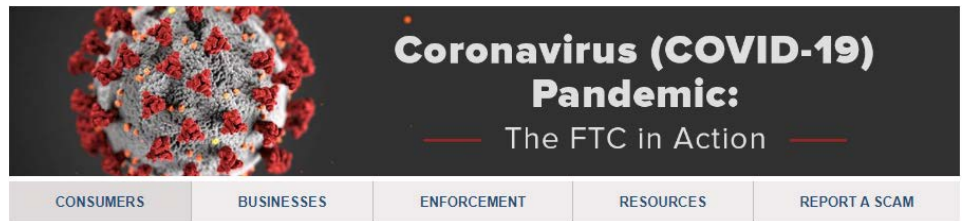
Even leaving your dog for “just a minute” may be too long. A dog's normal body temperature ranges from 101 to 102.5 degrees. Dogs can withstand a body temperature of 107 to 108 degrees for only a very short time before suffering brain damage – or even death.



Then add the fact that most pets are not properly restrained while in the car, and you've got some dangerous situations – for people and pets alike. Unrestrained pets can be seriously or fatally injured, or could even hurt you, in a collision or sudden braking situation. In addition, they're a distraction for the driver, which increases the risk of driver errors.

Please don't become another statistic: only take your pets in the vehicle with you when you absolutely need to, and always properly restrain your pets while in the vehicle.

COVID-19 Scams add another troubling side to the pandemic



As of June 30, consumers have submitted more than 115,000 reports of fraud related to COVID-19 to the Federal Trade Commission, resulting in reported losses of more than \$74 million. Scammers follow the headlines to take advantage of current events. They're doing the same now, exploiting people's concerns about the virus, as well as ripping off those who are affected by the pandemic's financial implications.

Help COVID-19 contact tracers, not scammers

After nearly three months of stay-at-home orders, America is starting to open up again. Contact tracers, the folks who work for state health departments to try to track anyone who may have been exposed to COVID-19, are an important part of our road to recovery. But some scammers are pretending to be contact tracers so they can profit off of the current confusion. They're trying to steal your identity, your money – or both.

A contact tracer might get in touch to discuss results of a test you know you took, or because someone you've been in contact with tested positive. In Minnesota trained workers will call the person who tests positive and the people who spent time close to the person with COVID-19.

[MN Dept Health tracing program information.](#)

What should you do if you think you're dealing with a fake contact tracer? A legitimate call from the MN Dept of Health will have a 612-area code, if they leave a message the call back number will have a 651-area code. Otherwise, hang up, close the door, or don't respond to, click on, or download anything that may be in an email or text. Then, report it to MDH and tell the FTC about it at [FTC.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).

Contact tracing call? 5 things to know

A contact tracer from your state health department might call if you've been exposed to COVID-19. But scammers are pretending to be contact tracers, too. Here's how you can spot the scam.



Real contact tracers won't ask you for money.

Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer, or cryptocurrency.



Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number.

Never share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it.



Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number.

Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you.



Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask.

If they do, you can bet it's a scam.



Do not click on a link in a text or email.

Doing so can download malware onto your device.

Talking to a real contact tracer helps stop the spread of COVID-19. Reporting scammers helps stop them, too. Report fake contact tracers to your state and at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint).



Common Robocalls about the Coronavirus



- Fake tests for Medicare recipients
- Free test kit scam
- Sanitation supplies
- Health insurance pitches
- Mortgage scam
- Social Security Administration scam
- Small business listing scam

Is a scammer getting unemployment benefits in your name?

June 3, 2020 by Seena Gressin, Attorney, Division of Consumer & Business Education, Federal Trade Commission

In a large-scale scam erupting in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, imposters are filing claims for unemployment benefits, using the names and personal information of people who have not filed claims. People learn about the fraud when they get a notice from their state unemployment benefits office or their employer about their supposed application for benefits.

If this happens to you, it means someone is misusing your personal information, including your Social Security number and date of birth. Act fast. Here are steps that can help you protect your finances and your credit:

- Report the fraud to your employer. Keep a record of who you spoke with and when.
- Report the fraud to Minnesota unemployment benefits agency. <https://www.uimn.org/uimn>
- If possible, report the fraud online. An online report will save you time and be easier for the agency to process. (Report it to the Sheriff's Office by calling 911 and a deputy will take your report.)
- Keep any confirmation or case number you get. If you speak with anyone, keep a record of who you spoke with and when.
- Visit IdentityTheft.gov to report the fraud to the FTC and get help with the next important recovery steps. These include placing a free, one-year fraud alert on your credit, getting your free credit reports, and closing any fraudulent accounts opened in your name. IdentityTheft.gov also will help you add a free extended fraud alert or credit freeze to your credit report. These make it more difficult for an identity thief to open new accounts in your name.

Review your credit reports often. For the next year, you can check your reports every week for free through AnnualCreditReport.com. This can help you spot any new fraud quickly.

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 2020 events:

Tuesday, October 6 – Night to Unite events in neighborhoods throughout the community

Thank you for working for safer neighborhoods!



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