



Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

Bob Fletcher, Sheriff

Neighborhood Watch

Public Safety Services Division – Crime Prevention Unit

1411 Paul Kirkwold Drive • Arden Hills, Minnesota 55112

Phone: 651-266-7339 • Fax: 651-266-7337

www.RamseyCountySheriff.us

Neighbors and Deputies working together for safer communities



Block Captain News – November 2020

DST to CST – clocks turn back Sunday November 1

When the clocks turn back on Sunday, November 1, our evenings will become darker much earlier. With the early onset of nightfall please adjust and keep an eye out for pedestrians, especially those in dark clothing. Children and adults are reminded to put electronic devices down, keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street. Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks whenever possible. Choose the safest routes to walk. Stay on the sidewalks or paths. If there is no sidewalk, walk on the left side of the road. Walk single file facing the traffic.

It's also time to review your city regulations on seasonal parking and snow removal policies.

In this issue:

Seasonal pedestrian safety
Winter driving & vehicle thefts
Voting on Election Day
Safety messages for holidays
Hackers and Scammers

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: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/winter-driving-tips>;

<http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/driving-advice/winter-driving-tips/#.WlY5s03ruUk>

Ramsey County COVID-19 response, assistance and services

Ramsey County is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with services across multiple departments working closely with federal, state and local government, health care and community partners. Learn more and find links to services at: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-information>

Voting on Election Day – Tuesday, November 3, 2020

Residents of Ramsey County and Minnesota have been able to vote early for the General Election since September 18, and many voters have taken the opportunity to cast their absentee ballot. For those who plan to vote in-person on the traditional first Tuesday of November here are few considerations:

- On Election Day you must vote at your assigned polling place.
- Polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day.
- Find your polling place - <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

If you have not previously voted in the same precinct or registered to vote ahead of time you can register on Election Day. To register on Election Day, you must show proof of identification and residence. This would be one of the following: (more details: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/register-on-election-day/>)

- 1) ID with current name and address, or
- 2) Photo ID and a document with current name and address
- 3) Registered voter who can confirm your address
- 4) College student ID with housing list
- 5) Valid registration in the same precinct
- 6) Notice of Late Registration
- 7) Staff person of a residential facility

COVID-19 precautions Ramsey County is committed to providing services throughout the coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak while protecting the health of residents and staff. All absentee and Election Day polling places have public health measures in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 including social distancing, hand sanitizer and single user pens.

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison on October 27 released guidance to the public about federal and state laws that protect voters from interference or intimidation, entitled “Know your rights to vote safely and without intimidation.” He released the following statement:

“Minnesota has a history of running the best, highest-turnout elections in America. Minnesotans have every reason to expect that the November 3 elections in our state will run as safely, smoothly, and securely as always. “Minnesotans can also expect that they will be able to vote without intimidation or interference. Minnesota and federal law are clear: it is strictly illegal to intimidate or interfere with voters.

These topics were covered in the [news release](#):

- No one may prevent you from voting or registering to vote.
- No one may force you to vote for or against someone.
- No one may interfere with you when you go to vote.
- Only voters are allowed within 100 feet of polling places, with limited exceptions. So-called “poll watchers” are not allowed within 100 feet of polling places.
- No one may harass or intimidate you more than 100 feet from a polling place.
- Who is allowed inside a polling place.
- No one may interfere with you while you cast your ballot.
- Challengers designated by political parties are allowed in polling places; however, they are subject to restrictions, and may not harass or intimidate you or attempt to influence voting in any manner.
- Law enforcement may not interfere with your right to vote.
- The President may not order agents of the federal government to polling places. Agents of the federal government may not interfere with your right to vote.
- The President may not order military to polling places. Military may not interfere with your right to vote.
- Private armed forces are illegal in Minnesota and may not interfere with your right to vote.

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. As we make plans to spend time with families and friends this season, please remember some important crime prevention steps for a safer season:

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.
- FTC video online shopping tips: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3w4t1dYCayM&feature=youtu.be>
- 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.

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.

Home security and safety tips:

- Don't display wrapped boxes under a lighted tree in the front window for thieves to see as they drive past your home.
- Don't pile up-empty gift boxes from your new computers, televisions, game systems and other electronics in front of your home on garbage day. Thieves will appreciate knowing that you have expensive gifts inside your home for them to steal. Instead, break down boxes and conceal the advertising when setting them out for recycling.
- Do NOT post your activities (gifts or plans to be away from home) on social media pages.
- Turn on outside lights to deter burglars.

Holiday themed charity & other phone scams:

- Verify the charitable organization & use of funds.
- Government organizations don't use gift cards as a method of payment.
- When in doubt – check it out. Criminals isolate victims and push for quick response.

Report any suspicious activity to the police, call 911.



Protect Yourself from Hackers and Scammers

Information from the Federal Trade Commission:

Hackers try to exploit vulnerabilities in your computer or phone. To steal your personal information, they trick you into downloading malicious software to your device so they can take control. And scammers try to get you to let your guard down by making up a story to get your money or information. But there's plenty you can do to protect your personal information and your wallet.

Protect the Devices You Connect to the Internet

- Take steps to protect your computer from [malware](#) like viruses and spyware. And find out how to protect your personal information before you [get rid of an old computer](#).
- Find out how to [protect the data on your phone](#) and how to erase that information before you get rid of your phone.
- Learn what you can do to keep your [voice assistant private and secure](#).

Know How to Avoid a Scam

If someone says you must pay by [wiring money](#) through Western Union or MoneyGram, by putting money on a [gift card](#) and then giving them the number on the back, or with [cryptocurrency](#), it's a scam.

Learn how to recognize and avoid common scams you might see in your inbox, on your phone, or online.

- Scammers send [phishing emails](#) and [phishing text messages](#) to try to steal your personal information. They may demand you [pay a ransom by Bitcoin](#) or say they have info about [a FedEx package delivery](#) for you.
- [Romance scammers](#) create fake profiles on dating apps or social media sites to trick you into sending money.
- [Tech support scammers](#) want you to pay them to fix a non-existent computer problem.

Report Scammers

If you spot a scam — or something you think is a scam — reporting it can help the FTC protect you and your community. Report it at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#).

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!



Thank you for working for safer neighborhoods!



[@RamseyCountySheriff](#)



[@RamseySheriff](#)



[@RamseySheriffMN](#)

Deputy Mike Servatka
Crime Prevention Specialist
651-266-7339

Randy Gustafson
Crime Prevention Coordinator
651-266-7315

email address: CrimePrevention@co.ramsey.mn.us

website: www.RamseyCountySheriff.us

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