



SHAKER HEIGHTS

September 2011

Dear Community Members:

It is hard to believe that school is back in session and that summer is almost over. I hope you all had an enjoyable and safe summer. I am happy to report that at mid-year, crime was down approximately 15% from 2010, despite the lagging economy, which oftentimes has a negative effect on crime rates. I attribute this reduction to two things: the hard work and dedication of the men and women of the Police Department and those of you in the community who dedicate your time and energy to watching over your neighbors and neighborhoods, making sure that Shaker Heights continues to be a safe place to live and visit.

As we begin to enjoy the next few months of changing weather and as days get shorter, our homes and garages are sometimes left open as we tend to try to hang on to the last remnants of summer and work to prepare our homes and yards for winter. Unfortunately, this allows ample opportunity for those who wander through your neighborhood looking for the opportunity to make you a victim of crime.

In preparation for a safe and healthy fall, I am asking for your help in keeping our neighborhood safe and crime at bay by reading the safety tips below and taking the necessary steps to help us prevent crime and stay safe.

Crime Prevention Tips to Protect You and Your Home

“Locks, lights, and neatly trimmed shrubbery” are keys to home and personal security.

Install lighting, such as “motion” lights or “dusk to dawn” detector lights on the exterior of your home.

Trim shrubbery around your home. Shrubby should be cut low and neatly trimmed so as not to provide someone who is considering entering your home with a place to hide.

Check your door locks to be sure they are sturdy, functioning properly, and are the proper type, such as dead bolt or key to key type, where glass is present. All locks should be keyed to one key only. A key should be placed in the immediate area in case of emergency--hidden but accessible.

Keep your garage door closed and locked when you are not outside and lock all property in your garage with a locking device and place it in a location so that it is not visible from the street when the garage door is open.



CITY OF SHAKER HEIGHTS | POLICE DEPARTMENT



SHAKER HEIGHTS

Do not leave bikes unattended, and make sure you lock your bikes, even if you are just going to be away for a moment. Also, please make sure that your bike has a license and that you are wearing your helmet when riding around the city.

Alarm systems are effective if installed by an alarm company licensed to conduct business in Shaker Heights. This information can be obtained from the Shaker Heights Police Department Crime Prevention Unit. Using the alarm system is most important even if going out for a short time period.

At night, if you are sleeping on the second floor of your home, make sure you keep all doors and windows closed and locked on the first floor of your home.

Vacation planning is extremely important. The use of lighting timers and notifying the Shaker Heights Police Department when you are leaving by calling (216) 491-1220 to make a "going away card" is important in securing your home.

If possible, have a neighbor or friend keep an eye on your home and have them pick up the mail and newspapers.

Lock your vehicle, even when garaged, and secure all personal property from view.

Remember to always be cognizant of your surroundings and those around you when walking, jogging, or bicycling.

Always secure your vehicle when unattended and secure personal property such as radar detectors, GPS devices, cell phones, purses, money, and any other valuables. Items such as those listed should be placed in the trunk area if possible or taken with you.

Remember, every theft is a crime of opportunity. By following the listed tips, it will considerably reduce your possibility of becoming a victim. Should you have any inquiries, please contact Gerald F. Jankowski, Crime Prevention Officer, at the Shaker Heights Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at (216) 491-1230.

Back to School Tips (from the Shaker Heights City School's Website)

Riding the Bus

School bus transportation is safe. In fact, buses are safer than cars! Even so, students need to remember these safety tips:

Have a safe place to wait for your bus away from traffic and the street.





SHAKER HEIGHTS

Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to enter.

When being dropped off, exit the bus and walk ten giant steps away from the bus. Keep a safe distance between you and the bus. Also, remember that the bus driver can see you best when you are back away from the bus.

Always follow the driver's instructions.

Use the handrail to enter and exit the bus.

Be aware of the street traffic around you. Drivers are required to follow certain rules of the road concerning school buses, but not all do. Protect yourself and watch out!

Walking to School

Mind all traffic signals and the crossing guard--never cross the street against a light, even if you do not see any traffic coming.

Walk with a buddy.

Wear reflective material; it makes you more visible to street traffic.

Riding a Bike to School

Always wear a helmet.

Wear reflective material.

Ride on bike paths where available and with traffic when on the street.

Obey all traffic signals and use hand signals when making turns.

Lock your bike when it is not in use.

Register your bike with the Shaker Heights Police Department.

Riding in a Car

Most traffic crashes occur close to home. Safety belts are the best form of protection passengers have in the event of a crash. They can lower your risk of injury by 45%.





SHAKER HEIGHTS

Everyone needs to be buckled up properly. That means older kids in seat belts, younger kids in booster seats and little kids in child safety seats.

Exit the car on the school side, NOT the street side.

Help keep children safe by dropping off and picking up students in designated areas only, not in the parking lot or bus loading zone.

Fire Safety Tips

Have working smoke detectors. **(Do not forget to change your batteries when the time changes in November.)**

Install, test, and maintain at least one smoke detector per floor. Smoke detectors in each bedroom are also recommended. Check them monthly and replace the batteries twice a year.

Be sure everyone knows two ways out of the home (including two ways out of a bedroom).

Sleep with bedroom doors closed. This will protect you from smoke traveling through your home.

Feel closed doors before opening them. The fire could be on the other side.

Be sure windows open easily from the inside, allowing for a speedy escape.

Crawl low in smoke. Smoke rises. The air will be clearer and cleaner near the floor.

Stop, drop, and roll if your clothes catch fire.

Practice and use a home fire escape plan.

For pan fires on the stove: put a lid on it to extinguish the fire or use a fire extinguisher. Never try to move a burning pan and never use water to try to extinguish a grease fire.

Never use the elevator in the event of a fire emergency. If you are unable to use the stairs to evacuate, wait in your apartment and call 911.

Designate a meeting place where everyone in your family can meet once outside.

Call 9-1-1 from a safe phone once outside.



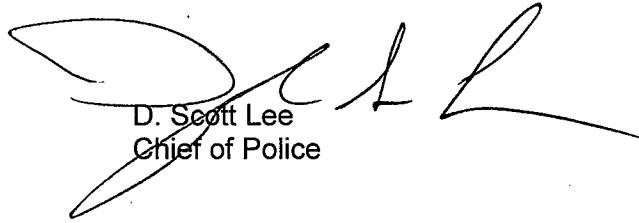


SHAKER HEIGHTS

Make certain everyone understands that once out of the building, no one is to re-enter without the permission of the Fire Department.

For additional information on fire safety, contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (216) 491-1215.

Sincerely,



D. Scott Lee
Chief of Police

DSL/rp



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