

Law Enforcement Crime Prevention Tips

WHAT IS SUSPICIOUS?

"Am I witnessing a crime?" Most of us have found ourselves wondering this at some time or other. However, because we are not really sure, we tend to ignore what we have just seen and, hoping it wasn't so.....Here are some guidelines that may help you in deciding if it is a police matter.

What is suspicious activity? You are the best judge of what constitutes suspicious activity in your area. Since you know what goes on in your neighborhood on a daily basis better than we do, if you think it's suspicious, it probably is. A majority of crimes are prevented by calls from alert community members.

Solicitors

Many solicitors are honest salespersons, however if they request to enter your home for any reason (to use the restroom, make a phone call, etc.) your warning bells should be sounding. This is a common trick of thieves to gain legal access to a residence for illegal activity or to "case it". Always follow your instincts if something seems suspicious. If the story doesn't sound right, they have no identification, they seem to be wandering in the area without going to doors, they have no products on hand, etc., call us right away. We will contact the person, find out what's going on, and might very well prevent you or your neighbor from becoming the victim of a crime.

Unfamiliar vehicles in the area could belong to the friend of a neighbor or could just be a disabled vehicle. They could also belong to a criminal looking for an empty home or a garage door to enter. Take into account all events when determining on whether or not to call us.

IF IN DOUBT, MAKE THE CALL!
Police Non-Emergency Number (703)691-2131
Suspicious Activity Concerning Persons

Circumstance	Possible Crime
Going door to door in a residential area, especially if one or more persons go to rear of residence.	Possible burglary suspects or trespassers.
Waiting or loitering in front of a house or business, if business is closed or house unoccupied.	Possible burglary suspects.
Forcing entrance, or entering your neighbor's house, when it is unoccupied.	Possible burglary, theft or trespassing.
Person running, especially if something of value is being carried.	Possible suspect fleeing the scene of a crime.
Person carrying property that is not wrapped, at an unusual hour.	Possible suspect fleeing the scene of a burglary or robbery.
Much human traffic to and from a certain residence if it occurs on a daily or regular basis.	Possible vice or fence operation.
Person screaming.	Possible rape or assault.
Persons loitering around schools, parks, or secluded areas.	Possible sex offenders or drug dealers.

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Suspicious Activity Concerning Vehicles

Circumstance	Possible Crime
Slow moving vehicle, without light, or if the course followed appears aimless. This is suspicious in any location including residential streets, schools, playgrounds.	Possible burglary, drug pusher, or sex offender.
Parked or occupied vehicle containing one or more persons, especially significant if observed at an unusual hour.	Possible lookouts for a burglary or robbery.
Vehicles being loaded with valuables if parked by a closed business or unoccupied residence.	Possible burglary or theft in progress.
Abandoned vehicle parked on your block.	Possible stolen car.
Vehicle containing weapons.	Owner may engage in criminal activity.
Vehicle where someone is being forced into it, especially females or juveniles.	Possible kidnapping, assault, attempted rape, or child molestation.
Locked vehicle that someone is attempting to forcibly enter.	Possible theft of a car or its contents.
Objects thrown from a vehicle.	Possible disposal of contraband.

Suspicious Activity Concerning Property

Circumstance	Possible Crime
Property in homes, garages, or storage areas is suspicious if accumulations are large, or items are in good condition but not in use.	Possible stolen property.
Property offered for sale at a very low price.	Possible stolen property.
Property in vehicles that is not normally found in vehicles, especially if observed at an unusual hour, or if the property is any of the following; TV sets, stereos, guns or auto parts.	Possible stolen property.
Property carried by persons on foot, especially suspicious at an unusual hour or unusual place. Very questionable if person is running and property is unwrapped.	Possible property just stolen in a burglary or robbery.
Property being removed from or being loaded into a vehicle or building, at an unusual hour, from a closed business or unoccupied residence.	Possible burglary or theft in progress.

Other Suspicious Activity

Circumstance	Possible Crime
Continuous repair operations at a non-business location.	Possible stolen property being altered.
Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or unoccupied residence.	Possible burglary in progress, completed burglary or vandalism.
Unusual noises such as gunshots, screaming or continuously barking dogs.	Possible burglary, assault, rape etc.
Sound of breaking glass.	Possible burglary or vandalism.
A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms.	Person may be injured, under the influence of drugs, or otherwise needing medical attention.