



Community Watch Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 1

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Our Mission

The mission of the Bonner County Sheriff's Office Community Watch Program is to proactively partner with law-abiding citizens to prevent and reduce crime. This will be accomplished through communication, crime prevention education and assisting communities, neighborhoods and businesses in achieving a safe environment for its residents.

Thank you for stepping up in your area of Bonner County and taking a leadership position in your local community watch group.

As of this writing we have 66 Neighborhood Captains, 44 groups and 930 members

WHAT CRIMINALS CAN DO WITH YOUR CAR REGISTRATION

Your car registration card also has your VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) on it. With your VIN and a few other pieces of information, a crook can obtain a title for your vehicle. Having the title, the crook can then wait until another opportunity arises and they can steal, and then sell, your vehicle. They have the title, they have a vehicle registration card, and they are (to most people) the owner of your vehicle.

In some states they can steal your vehicle and use the falsely acquired title to obtain a loan against your vehicle. There are businesses which will loan money against the title of your vehicle. It's not much; but it's essentially "free money" for the crook, as they can take the check they are given and run. They can acquire a title and steal a model of vehicle the same year, make and model as yours. They would then replace the visible VIN stickers/placards in the car and either sell it or use it to obtain a loan. The paperwork trail for this will wind its way back to you (and not them), and you'll have a great deal of explaining to do.

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Volunteer to become a Community Watch Coordinator

Our volunteers make a difference! Our trained and dedicated volunteers support the Sheriff's Office's Sworn Deputies and Professional Staff in a variety of positions.

Our volunteer candidates must meet the following minimum requirements:

- At least 18 years of age
- No felony convictions
- No misdemeanor convictions within the past 12 months
- Successful completion of an interview and background investigation
- Completion of orientation and training

So if you would be interested in joining our team of **Community Watch Coordinators** and going around assisting neighborhoods to develop their block watch programs give Sheryl Kins a call at 208-263-8417, ext. 3049.

Bonner County Sheriff's Office Website

Has it been a while since you looked up the BCSO website. If it has, take a few moments to look at the changes, particularly in the "Services" section. You will find things like links to past Community Watch Newsletters, information on calling in a suspicious circumstance to dispatch, or learning more about the community watch program.

Watch Captains Questions and Answers

This newsletter is as much yours as it is the Community Watch Program. As such we want to ensure you have an opportunity to ask questions and get answers to issues you may have. The questions will remain anonymous but the issues and discussion will be an important part of our communication and education process.

Call or email your question to Sheryl Kins at sheryl.kins@bonnercountyid.gov. It will then become part of the next newsletter.

Question: A while back there was a discussion about mail theft in Bonner County and what steps could be taken to help residents.

Answer: Thanks for raising this issue, as it is a year-round important topic to talk about. Here is some information to consider.

There are areas scattered throughout Bonner County that have been experiencing mail theft from residential mailboxes. The USPS Informed Delivery Program is a free notification service that allows you to digitally preview letters and to track packages that are scheduled to be and/or have been delivered. Here is the link to review the pertinent information and to sign up for Informed Delivery:

<https://informeddelivery.usps.com/box/pages/intro/start.action>

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Home Security – Camera Systems

Remember, that most property crimes are crimes of opportunity; criminals take advantage of our complacency and tendencies to keep our property unsecured.

Surveillance cameras and home security systems are becoming crucial tools for fighting crime.

Some of the biggest stories in recent months have involved surveillance cameras providing police officers with evidence to help solve investigations.

Technology is advancing every day and home security systems are getting more sophisticated. Some provide immediate results, with the ability to take pictures of intruders, detect motion and alert homeowners if there's suspicious activity, including trespassing, vandalism and theft of packages.

Other systems allow homeowners to see what's happening around their homes through an app on their phones, and it can be monitored from anywhere.

The growing interest in home security cameras means more options and better prices, experts say, with the cost varying based on several factors such as size, cell service availability, internet service and ability to install yourself.



Should you have to report the burglary of your vehicle, make certain that you report the theft of your vehicle registration. Also, call the DMV for your state and check to see if anyone has tried, or has, obtained a copy of your title recently. If they have (and it wasn't you or your spouse), you should contact the police or Sheriff's Office ASAP. This type of criminal activity is not limited to your vehicle, but also to travel trailers, ATV's, boats and hauling trailers.

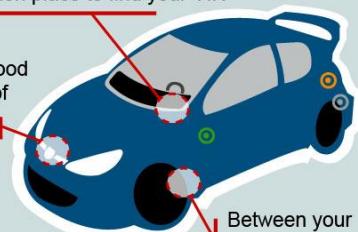
Crooks know from the registration certificate where you live, and can gauge, from the make, model and contents of your car, your income level. If one wants to go to the trouble, they can scope out your residence, and if the car isn't around, break in and burglarize you. Most people who break into cars aren't this industrious or used to planning capers like this in such detail, but it is done now and again.

Can't find your VIN?

Here are some common places to find it.

The driver side interior dash is the most common place to find your VIN

Under the hood at the front of the engine



Additional places to look:

- Trunk (under spare tire)
- Rear wheel well
- Driver door jam (open door)



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Humor in Uniform

A Miracle

A priest gets pulled over for speeding. The deputy sees an empty wine bottle in his car and smells alcohol on his breath.

“Father, have you been drinking?” asks the deputy.

“Only water, my son” replies the priest.

“Why then do I smell wine?” questions the deputy.

The priest, looking at the wine bottle, replies, “Oh my Lord, He’s gone and done it again!”

Cops and Kids

It was the end of the day when the deputy parked his police cruiser in front the station. As he was gathering his equipment, his K-9 partner, Jake, was barking and it was then the deputy spotted a little red-haired boy staring at him.

“Is that a dog you got back there?” he asked.

“It sure is,” the deputy replied.

Puzzled, the boy looked at the deputy and then towards the back of the cruiser. Finally he said, “What’d he do?”



Several BCSO Neighborhood Watch Volunteers in different areas of Bonner County have signed up for this free service, and they are very pleased with the service.

Please consider signing up for these notifications. Then, if you don’t receive your scheduled mail, keep your notification and call Bonner County Dispatch at 208-265-5525 with your information.



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