



Community Watch Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 3

June 2019

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 50 groups, 69 Neighborhood Captains, and 1,020 members

Keeping Yourself Safe When Out and About

Using your common sense and taking some precautions when running can help you avoid getting injured or becoming a victim. Before you even head out for a run, take a minute or two to do a safety check. Are your shoes tied? Are you familiar with your route? Does someone else know where you'll be running? Once you start running continue with the safety checks. Make sure you're running off the street or against traffic (so you can see cars coming at you). Watch out for cracks or bumps in the terrain or rocks and branches on your running path.

Exercising and keeping fit is a way of life for many people. Walking or running is an inexpensive, easy way to stay in shape.

Generally speaking, yes it is safer to run when it's lights out, as opposed to when it's dark. Here are some things to remember before you hit the road.

- Do not run or walk alone.
- Avoid walking or running at night.
- Plan your outing.
- Do not walk or run with earphones.
- Don't take short cuts through vacant lots, construction sites, parks or fields.
- Alter your route.

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Watch Captains, talk to our Captain

Beginning this month **Watch Captains** will have the opportunity to meet with Captain Tim Hemphill or Lt. Tony Riffle once a month to address issues specific to their neighborhood or other topics. Contact Sheryl Kins at 208-263-8714 for more information.

Bonner County Sheriff's Office Website

Has it been awhile 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's. 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: Does the Sheriff's Office record any statistical information about crime in Bonner County and Idaho.

Answer: This is a great question and the answer is yes. Here is a recap of the current crime report information.

All documented crime is provided to the Idaho State Police and their information is **normally one year** behind due to their collection methods. For example, the crime statistics they are reporting are for the year 2017.

When you visit their site

<https://nibrs.isp.idaho.gov/CrimeInIdaho>

you will find it is separated by each county. So, looking at Bonner County it appears that overall reported crime from 2016 to 2017 has reduced about 15%.

Specifically, crimes related to burglary, larceny, narcotics have all gone down.

However, crimes associated with homicide, motor vehicle theft, fraud and property destruction have gone up.

In 2018 there were 228 drug cases investigated resulting in 95 arrests. With regard to property crimes there was reported 171 burglaries, 285 thefts, 152 cases of vandalism, 57 prowler calls, 65 unlawful entries totaling 722 incidents. (average 2 per day).

Please continue to use the website: www.crimereports.com so that you can specifically look at your neighborhood's most recent activities.

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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 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.



- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Wear reflective material.
- Don't wear jewelry or carry cash.
- Always carry identification.
- Carry Runner's mace.
- If you sense that you are being followed, go to the nearest well-lit open business or where you see other people gathered.
- Never hitchhike or accept a ride from a stranger.
- Be alert when giving directions to pedestrians or motorists. Stay a safe distance to avoid being grabbed or dragged into an automobile.

The bottom-line is don't be an easy target, be aware of your surroundings, listen to your instincts and know what to do in the case of an attack. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Stop, look around and find the quickest exit or move towards other people.

Protect yourself from Sexual Assault

According to the UNIFEM report, one in three American women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, with the abuser usually someone known to her. If you find this shocking, it is.

If you're wondering what it has to do with running, it is important to understand that predators are no longer waiting for the cover of night to strike. A predator may surprise you in the early hours of the morning, during a midday trail run, or abduct you from the streets of your neighborhood in the late afternoon. A sexual assault is not a crime of passion. It is a clear act of violence intended to injure and humiliate the victim. Attackers do not discriminate between age, race or economic backgrounds - anyone can be a victim. (Info provided by L.A.W. Publications)

Humor in Uniform

A man was driving down the road when a policeman stopped him. The officer looked in the back of the man's truck and said, "Why are these penguins in your truck?"

The man replied, "These are my penguins. They belong to me."

"You need to take them to the zoo," the policeman said.

The next day, the officer saw the same guy driving down the road. He pulled him over again. He saw the penguins were still in the truck, but they were wearing sunglasses this time. "I thought I told you to take these penguins to the zoo!" the officer said.

"I did," the man replied. "And today I'm taking them to the beach."

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"Number two, please step forward and huff and puff."



Record Your Serial Numbers

What is needed to build a case involving the theft of your property:

- Record the serial numbers on your property and store them separately so that can be obtained later.
- Take pictures of items
- You can also apply numbers or markings using a simple engraver with your initials, driver's license number or with colored markings (don't use your Social Security number).

This information can be searched against pawn shop records via the Spokane Pawn Network, which covers Spokane, Coeur d'Alene and Newport Pawn Shops.

Bonner County pawn shops provide printouts of activity to local police departments and Sheriff's Offices.

Searches can then be done by the name, serial number and item description.



Success Story

Recently on the social media Facebook pictures were posted of an individual suspected of stealing pre-cut firewood in an area of the county that had an active block watch program.

As a result of this effort, the individual was arrested a few days later after people recognized the individual from the picture that was captured by the home owners security camera.

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