



# Community Crime Prevention Newsletter

Plymouth, MN

Volume 2009 Number 2

## Summer Bike Safety

Summer is here and many people are participating in outdoor activities, like bicycling. Bike riding is fun, but it also has some risks. By taking several precautions, you can greatly improve your and your child's safety on a bike.

- 🚲 **Always wear a bike helmet to protect your head.** Helmets can reduce head injuries up to 85%. Make sure your helmet fits and is worn correctly for the best protection.
- 🚲 **Wear good clothing.** Wearing light-colored or bright clothing can make you more visible to traffic. When riding at night, make sure to have reflectors and lights on your bike and clothes. Don't forget to secure your pant leg to avoid getting it caught in the chain.
- 🚲 **Follow traffic laws.** Bicyclists *must* follow the same rules as cars and obey all traffic laws: ride on the right-hand side of the road with traffic, stop at stop signs and red lights, and use hand signals when turning. **Left turn:** left arm straight out. **Right turn:** left arm in an "L" shape.
- 🚲 **Look both ways before crossing the street.** 7 out of 10 bike crashes happen at driveways and intersections.
- 🚲 **Other safety tips.** If you are riding in a group, always ride single file. Never carry passengers on your bike. Don't wear headphones—you need to be alert to traffic at all times because cars do not always see bicyclists. Finally, lock up your bike to help prevent theft!

Stay alert, ride smartly, and stay safe this summer!

- 👂 **Extra, extra, extra!** New bike helmets are sold at Plymouth Fire Station III (3300 Dunkirk Lane) every Thursday from 6-8 PM now through August 27<sup>th</sup>. Firefighters will help fit helmets, so you can be sure you are getting the right one! For more information, call 763-509-5198.

### Plymouth Citizens Public Safety Academy—Fall 2009

The Plymouth Police and Fire Departments are again offering the Citizens Public Safety Academy. The 13-week academy gives participants insight into the day-to-day world of Plymouth police officers and firefighters. Sessions will cover diverse topics, including fire operations, crime lab, SWAT, dispatch, investigations, and auxiliary services. Students will also learn about the challenges facing these professions. The academy will feature: classroom instruction on laws, methodologies, equipment and technologies; field experience; and personal interaction with department members. Classes will be held on Mondays from 7-10 PM, beginning September 7, 2009. Class size is limited and participants must be 16 years old or older. If you are interested in attending the academy, call 763-509-5136 for more information. The application process will include a criminal history check.

### Featured Crime Prevention Program: Self Defense for Females

The Plymouth Police Department offers a self-defense class for females of all ages. The Self Defense for Females class addresses many traditional safety concerns through an open discussion and participants learn easy defensive tactics techniques taught by Plymouth Police Officers. This hands-on, practical class is a must for any female! Bring your mom, daughter, best friend, or sister! Check for class listings through the Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department 763-509-5200. Cost: \$14 for Plymouth residents / \$19 for non-residents.

## Crime Free Multi-Housing Corner: Fire Safety

Plymouth has experienced several large apartment fires in the past few years. There are simple steps residents can take to reduce the potential of a fire:

- 🔥 **Never** throw cigarette butts off the balcony or patio. Properly dispose of cigarette butts in a metal container with a tight-fitting lid.
- 🔥 **Never** leave burning candles unattended.
- 🔥 **Never** use water on a grease fire. Cooking fires can often be stopped by placing a tight lid onto the pan.
- 🔥 **All fires and cooking devices, including grills, are prohibited on apartment balconies and patios.** Grills must be at least 15 feet away from the building. It is also illegal to store propane tanks inside an apartment unit, garage, storage area, or on the balcony or patio!

In addition, residents should be encouraged to have a family fire escape plan and practice it!

## TRAFFIC TIP

**New Booster Seat Law  
Beginning July 1, 2009,  
all children under the age 8 and  
under 4' 9" tall must be in a  
proper car seat or booster!  
Keep our kids safe!**

## Especially for Business Security Tips for Employees

Criminals are opportunistic. They often target weaknesses in security and can be very bold. **Do not assume that everyone is as honest as you are.** Employers should train employees in basic security and encourage good crime prevention practices.

- ✓ Employees should *never* leave handbags on desks or unlocked in a back room and do not leave wallets in coats. Keep valuables locked in a desk or a locker.
- ✓ Do **not** assume that strangers wandering in the building are members of staff or supposed to be there. Asking "May I help you?" will often deter a potential thief.
- ✓ Do **not** accept a stranger's word that he or she is authorized to be in the building. Check with someone in authority. Better yet, have all guests sign in and wear IDs.
- ✓ Do **not** give confidential information to strangers no matter how important they appear or how official they sound, especial over the phone. Always report any such requests for information to your employer.
- ✓ Limit knowledge where petty cash is kept and how much cash is kept on hand.
- ✓ Employees should report suspicious activity or persons by calling 9-1-1 immediately.

By taking basic security measures, you can help keep your employees and your business safe.

## Fraud Stop: Census Scams

The US Census Bureau takes a detailed census every ten years to get a count of every person living in the United States. The next census is scheduled for 2010. Mainly, data is collected by forms mailed out by the Census Bureau, but some information is collected in person. Americans are legally obligated to report a lot of personal data for every person living at an address. Census workers are already starting preliminary work, and scammers are already taking advantage of this! Be on the look-out for census scams! **The census does not collect data via email or the Internet!** Moreover, the Census Bureau **does not** ask for your social security number, bank account or credit card numbers, and will **not** ask you for money or claim you owe money. For more information about the 2010 census, contact the US Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

## Hot Summer Question: Do door-to-door peddlers need a license in Plymouth?

It depends. If peddlers are selling goods in hand, they must have a license. However, certain solicitors are **not** required to be licensed, such as those selling literature. We request door-to-door sales persons register with the City as a courtesy; however, they are not required to do so by ordinance. **If you do not wish solicitors to come to your home you can put a "No Solicitors" sign where it can be seen by someone approaching your front door.** If they still attempt to solicit, are overly aggressive, or you observe a solicitor acting in a suspicious manner call 9-1-1 and an officer will assist you.

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Emergency: 9-1-1

Non-emergency: 763-525-6210

Crime Tip Line: 763-509-5177

If you have any comments about this newsletter, please contact Officer Angela Haseman at the Plymouth Police Department, 3400 Plymouth Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55447, 763-509-5147 or at [ahaseman@ci.plymouth.mn.us](mailto:ahaseman@ci.plymouth.mn.us). Thank you!