



Community Crime Prevention Newsletter

Plymouth, MN

Volume 1 Number 1

Fraud Alert: **Ransomware**

Ransomware is not very common, but these attacks are becoming more popular and troublesome. The ransomware fraud is an extortion scheme where the extortionist “kidnaps” the victim’s computer files and then demands a ransom in exchange for the return of the files unharmed. Usually, the criminal uses malicious code to seize control of the victim’s computer and encrypt the victim’s files. The criminal then demands payment from the victim in exchange for the decryption key. Ransoms vary, but most range from \$10 to a few hundred dollars. Payment is often made through on-line sources, but can also be requested in the form of wire transfers. Ransomware can occur through email attachments or through direct access to a computer network, however, it normally occurs when victims visit an affected website. Currently, ransomware is limited to PCs, and has not yet affected Macs.

Ransom.A

Ransom.A, is a hoax. When the victim receives Ransom.A, the program states it will destroy files until the victim pays. However, this program does not have the ability to delete or encrypt files.

Dating Service Fraud

You receive a text message stating you registered for an on-line dating service and will be charged \$2 per day unless the subscription is cancelled by logging onto www.irrealhost.com. Once users log on to cancel, the site adds unwanted programs to your computer, lowering security settings, barring access to anti-virus sites, and making it vulnerable to hackers. For more information, go to www.fbi.gov.

To protect your computer from ransomware, simply continue to use basic computer-safety techniques: use firewalls, keep anti-virus and spyware software up-to-date, and keep all computer “patches” up-to-date. In addition, use the pop-up blocker and be careful about downloading Games, screensavers, and other software off the internet. Finally, back up your files periodically!

(Resource: www.scambusters.org)

**If you see suspicious activity,
please call 9-1-1 immediately.**

National Night Out

Plymouth celebrated another successful National Night Out (NNO) on August 1. 129 neighborhood parties signed-up to receive a police, fire, or McGruff Truck visit. NNO is held the first Tuesday of August annually. The goal of NNO is to “throw crime a going away party” by encouraging neighbors to lock up their homes, get to know each other, and continue to look out for each other the rest of the year. Together we can help prevent crime! If you would like to be on the mailing list for next year’s NNO, call Sara at 763-509-5198. Information / registration packets for 2007 will be mailed in April.

Police Explorers Participate in National Competition

Four Plymouth Explorers (Abby McNeil, Ashley Pederson, Kurtis Nusbaum, and Dan McCullough) attended the 2006 National Law Enforcement Explorer Conference in Flagstaff, Arizona July 10-15, 2006. The Conference was a great opportunity for the Explorers to showcase their accomplishments and meet Explorers from all over the nation. Plymouth did an outstanding job, placing 2nd in Arrest and Search and 4th in Burglary in Progress. In addition, Abby McNeil took home a 2nd place in the timed-fire shooting competition.

Reminder: Vehicles cannot be parked on any public city street between **2:00-5:00 AM**. To request an overnight parking permit, call 763-509-5160.

Especially for Business

Shoplifting

Shoplifting is a common crime that costs consumers and businesses **billions** of dollars each year. Shoplifters come from all age groups and from all income levels. There are 2 main types of shoplifters: *professionals* (who steal for a living) and *amateurs* (who steal for a variety of reasons and are usually easier to detect.) Shoplifters usually conceal merchandise on their person, but thefts may also occur by other means, like altering price tags.

Characteristics of Shoplifters

1. Carrying something that can be used to hide items or wearing clothing inappropriate for the weather
2. Seem nervous and don't want help
3. Watch the staff carefully
4. Frequent restrooms or fitting rooms
5. Cause disturbances or are overly fussy or demanding

Prevention Techniques

1. Greet customers
2. Monitor fitting rooms and sales area
3. Keep expensive items locked up
4. Be aware of suspicious activity
5. Prosecute all shoplifters and advertise this policy

Remember, *employees must observe the suspect take merchandise and then pass the last point of sale* before arresting a shoplifter. Once you apprehend a shoplifter, contact police by calling 9-1-1.

Business Watch meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of February, May, August, and November. The next Business Watch meeting will be **August 15, 2006 at 10:30 AM**. Officer Angela Haseman will talk to businesses about **workplace violence**, why it is a concern, and how to make your workplace safer. The meeting will be held at the Plymouth Police Department Training Room, 3400 Plymouth Blvd. Parking is free. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you on August 15th!

Featured Crime Prevention Program: Self Defense for Females

The Plymouth Police Department offers periodic self-defense/safety classes for females of all ages. The class addresses many traditional safety concerns through an open discussion and easy, hands-on defensive tactics techniques taught by Plymouth Police Officers. Check for class listings through Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department 763-509-5200. The next class is scheduled for September 21, 2006, 6:30 – 9:30 PM.

Crime Free Multi-Housing Corner Trespassing

What options do you have when a non-tenant is causing problems on your property? The easiest answer is to trespass that individual. Official trespass forms are available from the Police Department. Forms can be issued by a resident (to keep someone from their own unit) or management (to keep people off the property). Some things to remember when filling out trespassing forms:

1. You cannot trespass current tenants. To evict tenants, you must go through proper legal proceedings.
2. There must be a *specific basis* for trespassing someone (fighting, vandalism, etc.). In addition, that behavior must have occurred within the past *30 days*.
3. Forms must be served *in person*. Mailing a copy to the individual will not suffice.
4. You may trespass for a period up to *1 year*.
5. You can serve the form yourself. The person must sign acknowledging they received a copy. If they refuse to sign, give them a copy, and then have your copy notarized.
6. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself and *send the remaining 2 copies to the Plymouth Police Department* to make it official.
7. If you feel uncomfortable serving a trespass notice, you call 9-1-1 for police assistance.

One other important note: even if you have trespassed someone from your rental property, a resident may invite that person to visit. However, they must go straight to that apartment and leave immediately after. An invitation does not allow a guest to loiter in any common areas or wait on the property if the resident is not home.

Along for the Ride

Tune in to "Along for the Ride" Wednesdays at 8:30 PM on cable Channel 20. Get to know the Plymouth Police Department in a whole new way!

Emergency: **9-1-1** Non-emergency: **763-525-6210** Crime Information 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. Thank you!