



Community Crime Prevention Newsletter

Plymouth, MN

Volume 2011 Number 1

Calling 911: When to Make the Call

You've heard it before: You are our eyes and ears. If you see something, say something. Report suspicious activity. If you need a police officer call 911. Yet many people don't call the police until after a crime occurs. Why are so many people hesitant to call 911? People do not call for a variety of reasons. Some people may think a situation is not "important enough" to bother the police with. Some people are afraid of "being wrong" or "being embarrassed" if a situation is a legitimate activity. Some people fear retaliation if they get involved. Some people have tried to call police in the past and did not get the result they expected, so they believe calling the police won't do any good.

When to call 911

Most of us have been taught to call 911 only in an emergency (life-or-death) situation. In some areas this may be true. However, here in Plymouth, the way to get a police officer to respond, no matter what the situation, is to dial 911. We would much rather come out for a "minor" issue than deal with a larger situation that may have been prevented. *If you are thinking, "I wonder if I should call the police," then make the call!*

What happens when 911 is called

When 911 is dialed, the call connects to the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center. Even if the line is immediately disconnected, the Dispatch Center receives caller id/location information for landline calls. This allows police to respond to a call for help, even if the caller is unable to speak. (Unfortunately, we do not currently have this capability for cell phones, so it is important to give location information when calling 911 on a cell phone.) All 911 calls are answered and prioritized. Life-threatening or serious in-progress calls have the highest priority. In-progress non-life threatening calls are the next priority. Not-in-progress calls, information requests, and all other type of calls are assigned the lowest priority. This does not mean police will not respond to lower priority calls. If an officer is available, they will be dispatched to a call immediately, no matter what the priority level. However, if officers are on a higher priority call (like a physical domestic), lower priority calls (like noise complaints) will be temporarily held and dispatched at a later time, when an officer becomes available.

Information to give the dispatcher

Even if you are calling from a landline, it is important to give your name, callback number, location, and as much information about the reason for the call as you can. This information is important. While police can respond to anonymous calls, our response is limited. Courts have ruled that anonymous tips are not, in and of themselves, valid for police response. Having an identifiable complainant gives the information credibility and allows police to contact the caller back if further information is needed. Police also need good information to respond to the call. By letting us know what the situation is, whether it is happening right now or not, whether the suspect is there or leaving the scene, etc. helps police handle a call safely and effectively.

Help us keep Plymouth a safe and desirable community. If you see (hear or smell) something, say something by calling 911. Let us take care of the rest!

Calling 911: A Citizen Success Story

Earlier this year, a Plymouth resident called 911 because she saw a vehicle with 3 people in it driving slowly around her neighborhood. Officers responded and soon found a home in that neighborhood had been burglarized by these males. Further investigation revealed that these criminals were responsible for burglaries in another city and thousands of dollars worth of stolen property were recovered. Thanks to a resident simply calling 911 right away about a suspicious car, and not ignoring it, 3 criminals were arrested, victims got their property back, and further crimes were prevented.

**Crime Free Multi-Housing (CFMH)
Corner: 2011 CFMH Refresher Class**

The Plymouth Police Department is pleased to announce our first Crime Free Multi-Housing (CFMH) refresher-only training on **Thursday, May 12, 2011** from 12:30-4:30 p.m. at the Plymouth Police Department. The cost to attend the training is \$15. A registration brochure can be found on the Plymouth website: www.plymouthmn.gov.

Please note: this training only satisfies the refresher required once every 3 years. If you need the initial CFMH Phase 1 training, please call 763-509-5147 for more information.

More CFMH Phase 1 certification and CFMH Refresher trainings will be scheduled throughout the year, so keep checking the website for additional trainings.

Don't forget, the next quarterly Crime Free Rental meetings will be: April 14th, July 7th, and October 13th. All meetings are from 11:00 a.m. to noon.

Working together, we can make a difference!

Especially for Business: Robbery Procedures

Robbery is one of the most dangerous crimes faced by employees. Businesses should take steps to reduce the chance of robbery and help employees stay safe.

Prevention

- Have employees check the exterior for suspicious activity before opening and lock doors at close.
- Use good customer service. Greet everyone!
- Keep cash at a minimum and post signage.

During: Train employees to stay calm and cooperate.

After: Lock the door to prevent the robber from coming back and call 911 immediately.

If you would like to schedule robbery training for your business, contact 763-509-5147.

**Spring is here!
More people are out walking and
riding bikes. Pay extra attention
when driving!**

Preventing False Alarms

Plymouth homeowners and businesses with monitored alarm systems are required to obtain a permit through the Police Department. Permits are free for new alarm systems. Whether it is a simple home burglar alarm or a complex business security system, it is important to make sure everyone who uses the alarm understands how to use the system correctly. Like the "Boy Who Cried Wolf," multiple false alarms can cause distrust in the system. In addition, over 95% of alarms police respond to are false, wasting valuable resources in our tight economy. For residential homes, Plymouth Police will respond to **two false alarms at the same residence each calendar year without penalty to the owner**. On the third and subsequent false alarms within the year, police will assess a response fee of **\$50.00** per alarm. For commercial alarms, police will respond to **one false alarm at the same location each calendar year without penalty**. On the third alarm, a fee of \$50 will be assessed and this fee will increase by \$25, up to \$200, for each subsequent false alarm within the year. Fire alarm response fees are higher. For permit forms and fee schedules, visit www.plymouthmn.gov.

Fraud Stop: Charity Scams

We continue to see charitable giving scams increase in times of tragedy. The recent disaster in Japan is no exception. Criminals use legitimate-sounding names and ask victims for donations via email or phone. However, the money collected never reaches the intended recipient, or if it does, only a small percentage is given. **Make sure your contribution gets to those in need**. Never respond to unsolicited email, phone calls, or click pop-ups from charities asking for money; contact charities directly through official channels. In addition, research the organization prior to contributing to know where your donation is going and how it will be used.

Featured Safety Programs: Along For the Ride

Tune into Plymouth Channel 16 Thursdays at noon, Fridays at 6 p.m. or Sundays at 6 p.m., to see the Police Department's ½ hour informational television show, *Along for the Ride*. The show can also be seen on Community Cable Channel 20, Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m. Join us as we cover safety and crime prevention topics, officer highlights, traffic tips, viewer questions, and more! Don't have cable? No problem! Current and past *Along for the Ride* shows can be viewed via the City of Plymouth website www.plymouthmn.gov.

Emergency: **9-1-1** Non-emergency: **763-525-6210** CrimeStoppers: **800-222-TIPS**

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@plymouthmn.gov. Thank you!