



O'Fallon Police Department

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER



June 1st, 2016

School's OUT—Summer is Here!

This statement can mean a lot of different things to you. Longer days, no school, more kids running around the neighborhood, vacation, hot and humid weather... Crime tends to spike during summer, but it is usually because of opportunity. Remember to lock your doors and leave you garage doors closed over night. Don't provide those opportunities to criminals. Also be vigilant and watchful of your neighborhood. Call in any suspicious behavior. For those who do take those summer vacations, The O'Fallon Police Department now **offers house checks**. Contact the O'Fallon Police Department at (618) 624-4545 and request a house check while you are away. Once the necessary information is provided, an O'Fallon Community Service Officer will **check your residence once a day and ensure its security**. Officer Michael Hurt has a lot more helpful tips inside this newsletter.



ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
THIS NEWSLETTER
PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL

Important Contacts

Police/Fire **Emergency – 911**

Non-Emergency Police – 624-4545

Non-Emergency Fire – 624-4519

City Hall – 624-4500

Public Works—624-4500 ext 3



O'Fallon City Alderman

Gene McCoskey, Ward 1 624-2947

Richie Meile, Ward 1 624-6086

Robert Kueker, Ward 2 632-8386

Jerry Albrecht, Ward 2 632-7172

Jerry Mouser, Ward 3 632-5433

Kevin Hagarty, Ward 3 920-1513

Matthew Smallheer, Ward 4 616-3144

Herb Roach, Ward 4 632-7503

Michael Bennett, Ward 5 531-7041

Courtney Cardona, Ward 5 401-9765

Ned Drolet, Ward 6 632-3580

Ray Holden, Ward 6 628-0762

David Cozad, Ward 7 632-6150

Harlan Gerrish, Ward 7 206-8381



With the summer time travel season rapidly approaching, I thought it would be helpful to address a few matters when it comes to protecting your home while you are away.

When we go on a nice long summer vacation, our minds are mostly disconnected from everything going on back at home, it is a much needed break from daily stress and routines. One thing we do usually think about though, is the security of our home. Unfortunately, we all know that when we get home, the work that we've put aside at the office will still be here, along with all of our chores, but what about the stuff that is near and dear to us, the stuff we really care about and can't replace. It's hard enough to come home from a much needed vacation and get back into our daily routine, but what would make it even harder is if our house had been burglarized or damaged.

Here are a few tips to keep the summer time blues from setting in too early:

Don't post to Facebook

As we all know, our lives and personal information have gotten more accessible through the use of social media. Most everyone has, and uses social media daily. When I say everyone that includes criminals. With that said, nothing says vacancy more than a post to Facebook, Twitter, etc., expressing your excitement for your 7 day trip to Florida with all of your family on a specific date. Next step after this would be to post your address and garage code. I know we all love social media, but take a break, or at least filter what you post until you get home to protect your house and your belongings.

Use light timers

When a light goes on or off, it would suggest that there is someone flipping



a switch. Timers are an easy, inexpensive way to protect your home and give it the appearance it is being lived in. Timers can be set on multiple lights, to go on and off at certain times of the day, and on certain days. The timers can be alternated so that the same lights aren't going on and off every day at the same time. The more the timers are mixed up, the more realistic it can appear.

Leave the curtains the way they are

Don't close up all the curtains and blinds, especially in the summer. When we are at home, we leave them open for the nice summer sunlight to shine through. Closed blinds and curtains are a sure sign that no one is home. Also it makes it difficult for us as the police or community service officers to check your house if there is an alarm or vacation watch request.

Don't leave the spare key

It seems like a pretty obvious idea, but that key that has been hidden in the landscaping for years can be easily forgotten. Remove the key, no matter how well it is hidden, to leave no doubt that a criminal can't access your house. That is if you still remember where it is.

Cut the grass

This sounds pretty silly, but it goes along with making your house look as if you are still at home. Give the grass a low fresh cut the day before you leave so it does not get out of control in the week or so that you are gone.

Ask for assistance

Most of us have good neighbors, or family or friends who are close and are willing to help. Ask for someone to come by and check your house, pick up the mail/newspaper, hang out for a few minutes, etc. If you do this, remember to alert the appropriate people so they are not surprised by a vehicle or person at your house while you are away.

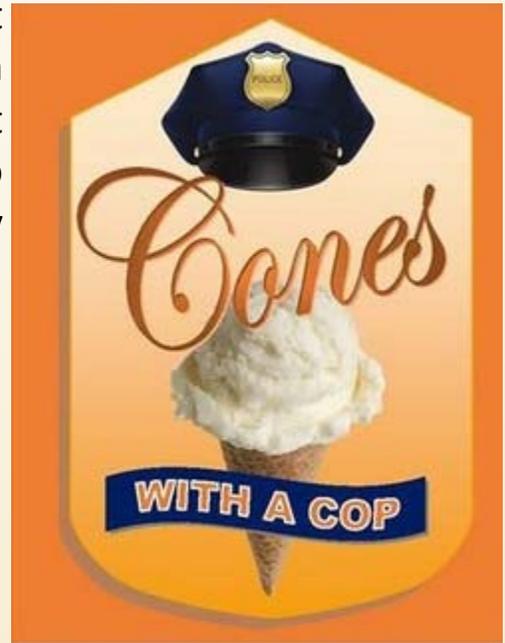
These are just a few easy ideas to protect your house and give you peace of mind while you are on vacation. What it all comes down to, is being creative. How can I make my house look like its being lived in while I am gone? Keep in mind these ideas, and use your own, to enjoy your vacation and come home to your house being just the way it was when you left.

As always, **if you see something, say something.** Have a good summer.



The information in this newsletter was put together by Officer Michael Hurt. If you have any questions or comments, he can be reached directly at mhurt@ofallon.org or 618 624-9593

We had our first cones with a cop event this past month! It was very successful and had many in attendance. The O'Fallon Police Department participates in forums like this so we can get to know people in the community and answer any



questions folks may have. Make sure to [like us on Facebook](#) so you can be up to date and "In the know" when the next event comes up!



The City of O'Fallon has been selected to participate in a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey which will be conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, part of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

This means there will be people conducting this survey at random residences in St. Clair County from May 2nd through June 29th. Interviewers will be knocking on doors of the randomly selected households where they will conduct a brief questionnaire at the doorstep.

All interviewers will carry official CDC identification.

If you have any questions, please give us a call 624-4545.

Construction Burglary Update:

The O'Fallon Police Department have taken reports of burglaries occurring at various new homes being built around town. It has been more than a month since our last report, but surrounding communities have started to experience the same. Suspects are still at large. Just a reminder if you live near a new home under construction, **please report any suspicious behavior immediately.** Any activity after hours or in the middle of the night should be called in.



The social network Nextdoor is catching on across the city. I know

some of you are reading this newsletter for the first time because of Nextdoor. If you have any questions about the program, please let me know. I have heard a lot of good reviews.



Police Department Contacts for The Neighborhood Watch Program:

- **Det William Barlock** wbarlock@ofallon.org
Voicemail: 618 624-9555

Windsor Creek/ Bluffs at Ogle Creek

- **Sgt Mike Mojzis** mmojzis@ofallon.org
Voicemail: (618) 624-9557
- **Ofc Ben Sosa** bsosa@ofallon.org
Voicemail: (618) 624-9541

Southview Gardens/ Edna St

- **Ofc Eric Buck** ebuck@ofallon.org
Voicemail: (618) 624-9568
- **Ofc Nick Stewart** nstewart@ofallon.org
Voicemail: (618) 624-9572

Oak and Madison/ Witte Farms / Thornbury Hill/ Manors at Thornbury Hill

- **Ofc John Kostainschek**
jkostainschek@ofallon.org
Voicemail (618) 624-9571
- **Ofc Michael Hurt** mhurt@ofallon.org
Voicemail (618) 624-9593

Neighborhood Watch

Mission:

The O'Fallon Police Department's purpose for the Neighborhood Watch is to establish and maintain a partnership with residents in each neighborhood throughout the community.

To be successful, this partnership will be rooted in two-way communication, periodic meetings, and information sharing. The prevention of crime and furthering of community policing strategies are the ultimate goals of the program.

Please report any suspicious behavior!

What is a Neighborhood Watch?

It is a community of citizens living in close proximity organized with the common goal of taking an active role in making their community healthier and crime free through cooperation with the police and other city resources.

You are the EYES and EARS of the Police
Department

“See something, Say something”