Emergency Preparedness and Safety Committee

Safety and Security Presentation

On June 25th, Officer Melanie Romano, Community Services Officer with the Montgomery County Police Department, made a Zoom presentation on the recent auto vandalism, theft, and related incidents in Washington Grove. This was followed by a question and answer session. **Below is a summary of the Safety and Security information provided by Officer Romano:**

- Stolen vehicles and attempts are typically Kia and Hyundais. (TikTok Kia Challenge)
- For WG, theft from vehicles (TFV) rose from 1 in 2025 to 9 in 2026 (to date), and auto theft rose from 0 in 2025 to 3 in 2026 (to date).
- Detectives have identified a group of juveniles and have arrested two juveniles.
- Their pattern (MO) is to break a back window and either steal the car or take loose items of value
- Practical steps residents can take:
    - Park vehicles in a locked garage where possible, or park in well-lit, well-populated area
    - Install bright, motion sensing exterior lights
    - Consider purchasing surveillance cameras for the exterior and EVEN your vehicle
    - ALWAYS lock your vehicle and set the alarm
    - Consider purchasing a shield or motion sensor for your catalytic converter

Important phone numbers to keep handy:

Emergency 911

If you inadvertently dial 9-1-1, **DO NOT HANG UP!**

- Stay on the phone and advise that you mistakenly dialed 9-1-1
- If the call is disconnected, the 9-1-1 taker will attempt to call you back
- If the caller does not confirm whether or not it is an emergency, the police may be dispatched to your location

Non-Emergency police: 301-279-8000
Phone tips to MCPD: 240-773-TIPS (8477)
Text tips to MCPD: CRIMES (274637)

Information about two MC Security Camera Programs provided by Officer Romano:

1. Camera Registry Program, https://mococonnect.org/camera-registration/, where after registry and your approval, MCPD will be able to access your video information to assist investigators in collecting evidence, and
2. Police-Private Security Camera Incentive Program in which rebates of up to $250 are available.
   For additional information:
   email: pol.camera.rebate@montgomerycountymd.gov
   or call: 240.773.6120
   or go to their website at this link.

Please feel free to contact Councilor Kriss Grisham at councilorkriss@gmail.com with any emergency preparedness or safety concerns.

We need Volunteers to reinvigorate our Emergency Preparedness and Safety Committee (EPSC)! Please consider supporting this interesting and important committee. Thank You!!