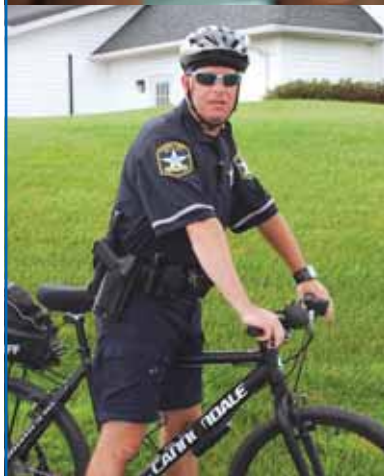


# CRIME PREVENTION STARTS WITH YOU

Safety experts agree that the best way to deal with crime in the home is to take every step possible to prevent it from happening to you. Every person should know - at the very least - basic yet important crime prevention tips that will keep you and your family more safe and secure.



## OCTOBER IS CRIME PREVENTION MONTH

Visit the Harford County Sheriff's Office web site at [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org) and click on the link



## IDENTITY THEFT:

In the course of the day, you do many activities that put your personal information at risk—from writing a check at the store to charging merchandise in person or over the phone. You may not think twice about these transactions, but others might.



Identity theft — when a perpetrator assumes someone's identity for personal or financial gain, like stealing a credit card to make financial transactions in the victim's name — is the fastest-growing crime in America.

According to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, there were almost 10 million cases of identity theft in 2004, which cost consumers \$5 billion.

The National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign, sponsored by the National Crime Prevention Council, aims to educate consumers about what they can do to prevent identity theft. The council offers the following tips.

- Do not give out your personal information unless you initiate the contact or know the person or company with whom you are dealing. Also, never disclose personal information, such as a Social Security number or bank account number, in response to an email. Legitimate businesses will not ask you to do this.
- Do not disclose your credit card number to an online vendor unless it is encrypted and the site is secure. Look at the first part of the Web address on your browser. It should read "https://."
- Do not write your Social Security number or telephone number on checks or credit card receipts.
- Remove all documents with personal information from your hard drive before discarding your computer or sending it in for repair.
- Shred discarded documents, including preapproved credit card applications, bank statements, store receipts and utility bills. "Dumpster divers" can gain access to your personal information if such items are thrown in the trash.
- Cancel all credit cards that have not been used in the last six months. Open credit is a prime target for thieves.
- Order your credit report at least twice a year and report any mistakes to the credit reporting agency in writing.

If you are a victim of identity theft, contact your local police department as soon as possible. If your identity was stolen in one jurisdiction but used in another, you may have to report the crime in both jurisdictions.

To learn more about preventing identity theft, visit the National Crime Prevention Council's Web sites at [www.weprevent.org](http://www.weprevent.org) and [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

Source: [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

Never give any **personal information** over the phone unless you initiated the call.

Your bank or credit card company already has all the information they need. Beware of con artists trying to get your financial information

## A message from Sheriff L. JESSE BANE

October is Crime Prevention Month and Sheriff L. Jesse Bane has challenged the entire community to make crime prevention a priority. "This is a great month to pay tribute to law enforcement and the many people who have taken personal responsibility for their neighborhoods and community organizations that work for the common good," stated Bane.

In 1984, the National Crime Prevention Council, the nation's center of excellence for preventing crime, designated October as Crime Prevention Month. The month-long commemoration reflects the adage that prevention pays off. The NCPC believes strongly that citizen involvement in crime prevention can and continues to play a vital role in helping many communities stay safe.

"We must continue to work at reducing crime in our county," said Sheriff Bane. Experience in Harford County has consistently proven that grassroots, collaborative action to support law enforcement works to keep crime down. Preventing crime takes action by each individual citizen. A community with rampant crime is a community that lacks citizen involvement and partnership with local law enforcement. Everyone can do something to prevent crime, from helping police identify crime problems, starting a Neighborhood Watch, or taking common sense steps to protect their homes and property.

The three things necessary to commit a crime are: Desire, Ability, and Opportunity, known as the Crime Triangle. As a citizen, there is little you can do to affect a criminal's desire and/or ability to commit crime. Therefore, minimizing/eliminating opportunity is your best defense against crime. We have provided a range of crime prevention awareness information in this publication from a variety of resources. We encourage you to read and share the information with your friends, family and co-workers.



## STAY INFORMED

Keep up to date with community news and safety reports specific to your interests by joining the Harford County Sheriff's Office community email list. Simply log on to the home page of [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org) look for the "Stay Informed" sign up box. You can indicate what reports and information you would like to receive, to meet your specific needs.

The County Connect-CTY provides Public Safety officials the ability to send emergency messages to residents and businesses within minutes. Notifications may include severe weather, imminent flood warnings, missing persons, and crime trends in your neighborhood.

It also will send text messages to cell phones, PDAs, e-mail accounts, and TTY/TDD for the hearing impaired. Publically available residential & business phone numbers have been automatically entered into the system, however officials urge citizens & business owners to add unlisted telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, and email addresses. Register for free at [www.harfordpublicsafety.org](http://www.harfordpublicsafety.org) and click on the Connect-CTY Sign-up Now icon.



## CRIME IN YOUR AREA? FIND OUT ANYTIME!

"CrimeReports makes it simple and easy for you and your department to share timely and important local crime data with citizens, activists and other community organizations.



Found on the Harford County Sheriff's Office website at [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org)

If you are a victim of a burglary, it is important that you know the serial numbers of the items stolen. Without the positive identification made possible by a serial number – or a unique number that you may engrave or mark on your property – you may not be able to prove you are the rightful owner if the item is recovered from the thief. Recovered property that cannot be positively identified as being stolen cannot be used as evidence against the thief.

Take a few minutes and record the description, serial numbers and value of these items, which are most likely to be stolen such as electronics, jewelry, art objects and electronics. Take color photographs and not any marks, blemishes or features that make them uniquely identifiable. Keep your property record form and photograph with your insurance papers on in another safe place.

Visit our website at [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org) to download your free Personal Property Identification Form.



## MOBILE CRIME PREVENTION OUTREACH OFFICE SCHEDULE

In honor of crime prevention month, the Harford County Sheriff's Office is bringing crime prevention and safety tips to a community near you. Every Thursday evening, members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Team will be in a designated neighborhood to provide the citizens of Harford County with important and pertinent crime prevention and safety tips.

Tuesday, 10-05-10	4-9pm	Abingdon Branch HCPL
Tuesday, 10-12-10	4-9pm	Joppa Branch HCPL
Thursday, 10-14-10	4-9pm	Churchville Recreation Center
Tuesday, 10-19-10	4-9pm	Bel Air Branch HCPL
Tuesday, 10-26-10	4-9pm	Edgewood Branch HCPL





## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH®

One great way to prevent crimes of opportunity and stay safe is to join or begin a Neighborhood Watch® program. A neighborhood watch is a program in which all the people who live in one area agree to watch out for each other. So if one of your neighbors notices, a suspicious character hanging around your house, or a car that keeps driving up and down your block, they will notify you and contact the police. Criminals are warned of an active watch by signs that are posted prominently in the area. When they see the clear signals that the people in this community are working together to prevent crime, they will know their chances of being caught are much higher and go somewhere else.

### WHAT is Neighborhood Watch® Program?

Neighborhood Watch® is a crime prevention program enlisting the active participation of residents, in cooperation with the Harford County Sheriff's Office. The main objective is to reduce the incidents of fear and crime in their communities. It involves neighbors getting to know one another and developing a program of mutual assistance. It involves neighbors becoming educated in crime reporting and suspect identification techniques. Finally, it involves neighbors using crime prevention strategies as tools to reduce crime in their communities.

### WHY Neighborhood Watch® Program?

The community has the primary responsibility for combating crime. The most effective approach is to stop crime before it occurs. The ability to stop crime is greatly enhanced when neighbors cooperate with one another to assist the Sheriff's Office. Neighborhood Watch members will receive Operation I.D. stickers to place in their windows and the Sheriff's Office will place Neighborhood Watch signs on streets, warning criminals they are in an active Neighborhood Watch community. This lets the criminal element know that "neighbors are watching out for one another."

### HOW do I start a Neighborhood Watch® Program?

Neighborhood Watch programs are the most effective means available for keeping crime out of neighborhoods because they rely on the best crime fighting tool ever invented: good neighbors. Fortunately, good neighbors are found everywhere. They live in houses and apartment buildings; they live in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Good neighbors are everywhere. The Harford County Sheriff's Office Neighborhood Watch Program unites the Sheriff's Office with local organizations and individual residents in a community-wide effort to reduce residential crime. Neighbors working together with the Sheriff's Office are a formidable crime fighting team. Be a good neighbor and make your community safer by starting a Neighborhood Watch® Program.

Talk to your neighbors. Are they interested? Do they understand the value of a Neighborhood Watch® Program? Are they aware of, or concerned about specific crime problems in your area? If they are, be sure to mention the following:

- Neighborhood Watch® is a partnership between neighbors to assist the Sheriff's Office in the reduction and fear of crime;
- Neighborhood Watch® does not require frequent meetings;
- Neighborhood Watch® does not require anyone to take personal risks to prevent crime, and the Sheriff's Office discourages community members from doing so;
- A representative from the Sheriff's Office will attend your meetings to answer questions about crime and provide information about Police procedures.

The Harford County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Unit will assist in starting a program in your neighborhood. A Community Policing representative will be available for your first meeting to assist with the initial organization of the Neighborhood Watch® Program and to discuss crime concerns specific to your neighborhood or community. **To get started contact your Community Policing Office in your area. Or visit the Harford County Public Library and request to borrow a Neighborhood Watch Start-up Kit from their shared collection.**

## Don't Make It Easy For Criminals - REMEMBER TO LOCK YOUR HOME AND CAR

Not so long ago, people did not feel the need to lock their doors or windows. But times have changed, and so has the need to use locks for protection.

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, most individuals do not have the proper lock security. Only half of Americans have dead-bolt locks on all of the entry doors to their homes and nearly one in five have none at all.

The National Crime Prevention Council recommends checking and updating old locks on all doors and windows and replacing them with ones that provide protection from keys being duplicated without your knowledge. In addition, it advises you to make sure your locks have a long enough bolt so that the door cannot be pried open. Installing quality locks is the first line of defense against home burglaries.

### Other steps can be taken to increase your security, as well. Here are some tips from the Harford County Sheriff's Office.

- **Use your locks.** Even the best locks can't protect you if you don't use them.
- **Do some yard work.** Trim hedges and bushes so thieves can't hide out.
- **Know your neighbors.** Neighbors who look out for each other are among the best, and least expensive, defenses against neighborhood crime.
- **Secure your spare.** Leave your spare key with a trusted neighbor. Never hide it on the property. Burglars have more experience looking for keys than you do hiding them.
- **Let there be light.** Make sure all outside entrances — front, back and side — have good lighting so burglars can't easily hide.
- **Stop mail and paper deliveries.** A pile of newspapers in the driveway is a clear sign to a thief that you're away from home.

For more tips on securing your home and yourself, visit the Harford County Sheriff's Office website site at [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org).

### COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

#### EMERGENCY 911

#### Harford County Sheriff's Office 410-838-6600

Non - Emergency or General Business  
[www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org)

#### Aberdeen Police Department 410-272-2121

[www.aberdeen-md.org/services/departments/police/](http://www.aberdeen-md.org/services/departments/police/)

#### Bel Air Police Department 410-638-4500

[www.belairmd.org/departments/police.asp](http://www.belairmd.org/departments/police.asp)

#### Havre de Grace Police Department 410-939-2121

<http://www.havredegracemd.com/departments/police.htm>

#### Maryland State Police - Barrack D - Bel Air 410-879-2101

<http://www.mdsp.org/>

#### States Attorney's Office 410-638-3500

[www.harfordcountymd.gov/StatesAttorney/](http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/StatesAttorney/)

#### Harford County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Unit

**Southern Region - 410-612-1670**  
392 B Ellsworth Place, Joppatowne, MD 21085

**Northern Region - 410-638-3625**  
708 Highland Road, Street, MD 21154

**Darlington Office - 410-638-3713**  
1024 Main Street, Darlington, MD 21034  
[CommunityPolicing@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:CommunityPolicing@harfordsheriff.org)

## How Parents Can **PREVENT DRUG ABUSE**

Research shows that the main reason that kids don't use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs is because of their parents -- because of their positive influence and because they know it would disappoint them. That's why it is so important that parents build a strong relationship with their kids and talk to them about substance abuse -- the earlier the better! The good news is it's easy to do! Here are a few ways you can build a positive relationship with your kids and start talking to them about drugs. (Note: "Drugs" refers to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.)

- Establish and maintain good communication with your children.
- Get involved in your children's lives.
- Make clear rules and enforce them consistently.
- Be a positive role model.
- Help your children choose friends wisely.
- Talk to your children about drugs.



## DRUGS AND OUR COUNTY

Narcotics and vice crimes are elements in today's society that not only destroy the individuals that are partaking in activities, but entire families and communities as well. In 1988, the Harford County Task Force, consisting of Harford County Sheriff's Office, Maryland State Police, Harford County States Attorney's Office, Aberdeen Police Department, Bel Air Police Department and Havre de Grace Police Department was formed to focus on the larger and more complex narcotic and vice investigations that take place throughout the county. This task force conducts criminal investigations, targeting high-level drug traffickers, importers, and money laundering organizations.

In recent years, Law Enforcement has determined that drugs are not only prevalent in the inner cities, but the tentacles have reached far into the suburbs. The dedicated men and women assigned to this special task force face an enormous challenge, one that often takes a physical and mental toll on each individual officer. It is a tough and sometimes unrewarding assignment, demanding a lot of extra time, dedication and resources. For these reasons, this profession places a tremendous strain not only on the officer but on their families as well. The community salutes all the dedicated men and women assigned to this task force in the county who work painstakingly to curtail this plague. These dedicated officers risk their lives on a daily basis to make their communities, which they serve a safer place to live, work and raise a family. The Harford County Task Force is the most successful task force in Maryland according to recent State Police Statistics.

According to the Department of State Police 2008 Annual Report, Drug Enforcement Division, the Harford County Task Force ranked first in the State of Maryland for search warrants conducted and currency seized. They were ranked in the top five for, seizures of vehicles, cocaine powder, cocaine crack, heroin and marijuana. In addition, they successfully completed to major wiretaps, which contributed to their strong ranking in drug related arrests in the State.

With the help of both concerned citizens and narcotic users, the Harford County Task force attempts to seek out and limit the illegal flow of narcotics in Harford County MD. The Task Force is not restricted to county boundaries and with the aid and assistance of Local, County, State and Federal authorities; they investigate all leads of narcotic activity wherever the resolution points.

**The Harford County Task Force relies heavily on concerned citizens and all members of the community to supply them with the necessary information to control illegal activity. Anyone with this type of information is encourage to call the Harford County Task Force Tip line at 410-836-7788, text the tip to "CRIMES" (274637) begin the message MCS, then add your tip information or send an anonymous tip through [www.harfordsheriff.org](http://www.harfordsheriff.org) – under the help us find section of the website.**

