



YOUR Community, YOUR Neighbors
OUR RESPONSIBILITY
get involved today

Columbia Neighborhood Watch

June, 2020

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As a result of the Covid -19 virus, the City has terminated its' funding agreement with US. This is due to lost revenue and the extra cost the City has experienced. This is a large blow to this organization, but we are moving on. We are looking into grants and will just have to tighten our finances until we can acquire additional funding.

With the virus disrupting everyone's lives and the stay at home order, you would think that the Police calls for service would have dropped. This is not the case, as they have stayed about the same as before the virus and stay at home order.

Naturally, The in person Watch trainings have been put on hold, but we are still here to assist any member or answer any questions you may have. **We are looking into training via the internet and will be offering training in the convenience of your home via webinar.**

Your Board is still active and we held the May Board meeting via the internet.

Inside this issue:

CPD's Liaisons	2
Help us at no cost to you Training	3
Spot Fake Charities	4
National Night Out/ Does our Watch Work	5
Neighborhood Awareness	6
Crime Risk vs Reward/ Joke	7



Staying safe while staying apart

We all need to work to be even safer during this challenging time. We need to remember our basic crime prevention principles while staying apart but still staying interactive with our neighbors and families. Try to maintain the safest lines of communication so that suspicious incidents can either be easier explained or investigated further by local authorities. We all are home now more than ever so we all see and hear more " abnormal" behavior in our neighborhoods. The more of an educated perspective that we can maintain, the more we can decipher what is potentially criminal or simply a change of daily behaviors due to our current normal.

Please try to be supportive of your neighbors and patient as we all work to get through this together. Some recent neighborhood concerns that we are seeing more during this difficult time include the following:

- Increased or abnormal parking concerns
- Speeding and careless driving
- Peace Disturbance / Noise Violations
- Barking or unattended pet concerns
- Over Occupied Housing concerns
- Trespassing on private property concerns
- Property Maintenance issues

We are always working towards better behaviors and we always appreciate your continued support.

Help us at no cost to you:

COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, Congratulations on your enrollment into the **Gerbes Food Stores Community Rewards Program**. Your members may begin enrolling.

You have been assigned a new NPO (Non-Profit Organization) number *BF527*. Please refer to this number in all future correspondence.

To Use the Gerbes Food Stores Community Rewards Program:

Simply encourage your participants to visit the appropriate link below..

For Gerbes Stores - go to <http://www.gerbes.com>

Once logged into their Gerbes Food Stores account they can search for COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH either by name or BF527 and then click Enroll. New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a *rewards* card.

*If a member does not yet have a Gerbes Food Stores *rewards* card, please let them know they are available at the customer service desk.

REMEMBER, purchases will not count for your organization until after your participants register their *rewards* card.

Participants must swipe their registered Gerbes Food Stores *rewards* card or use the phone number that is related to their registered Gerbes Food Stores *rewards* card when shopping for each purchase to count.

TRAINING:

Until cleared by the Health Department, all our trainings will be via the internet in the form of a live webinar training.



7 Ways to Spot Fake Charities After a Disaster

Here's how to give without getting scammed

With the Covid virus lots of organization are asking for donations:

Some of the [bogus websites](#) seek your credit card number to collect supposed donations, possibly also using that information later for [identity theft](#). Others infect your computer with malware that can ferret out sensitive information, such as your account numbers or passwords.

Fraudsters also do their work by blasting out thousands of spam emails, text messages and phone calls. They get their word out on Facebook and Twitter and even go door-to-door. "Tragedies inspire people to give," says Art Taylor of the Better Business Bureau's [Wise Giving Alliance](#). "After every natural disaster and manmade catastrophe, we see an outpouring of generosity ... along with the inevitable scams and frauds. We urge donors to take the time to make sure their donations are going to legitimate charities."

Before donating to a charity, take time to authenticate it. In addition to the Wise Giving Alliance, charity names and reputations can be vetted at [Charity Navigator](#), [Charity Watch](#) and [GuideStar](#). You can also contact the [agency in your state](#) that regulates charities. Be suspicious of charities not listed or with questionable track records.

When using an Internet search engine to find charities, treat the results pages with caution. Carefully read organizations' Internet addresses before clicking on them. Scammers often create rogue websites with sly misspellings, tweaks or sound-alike names. Also know that legitimate nonprofit organizations typically end in .org, not .com.

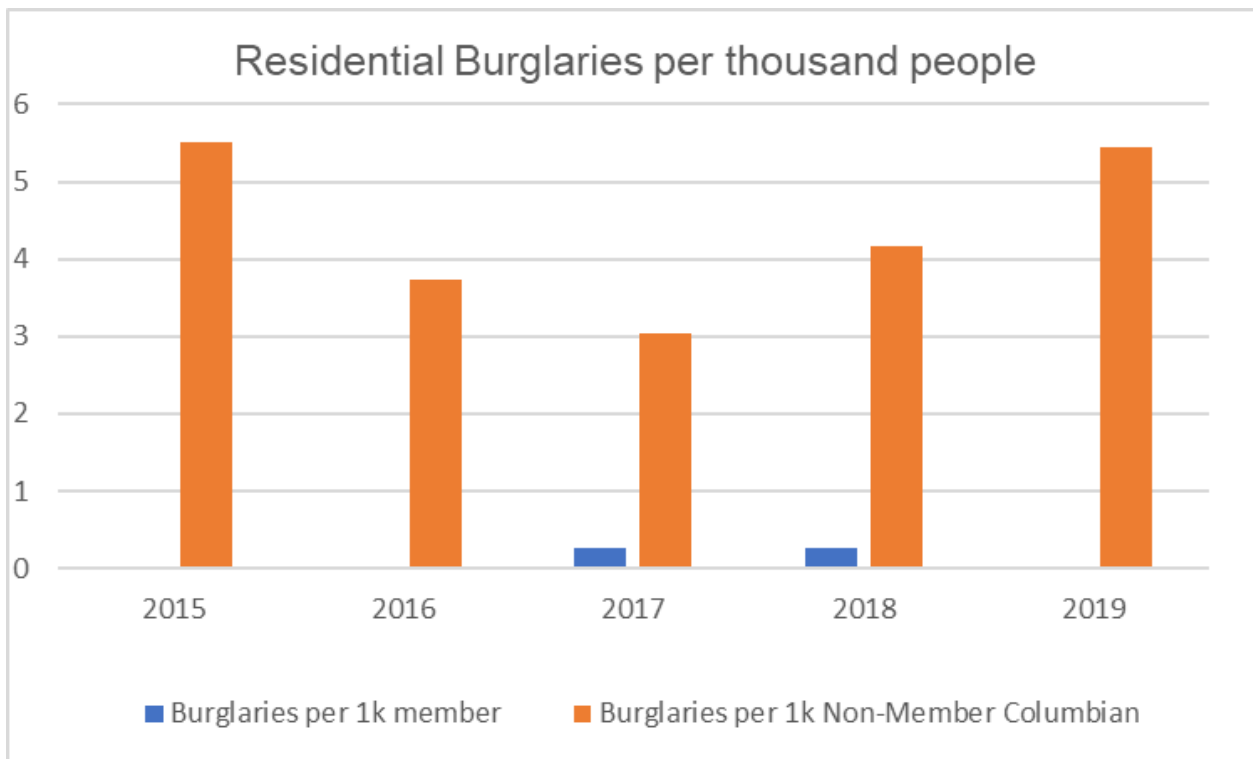
Don't provide credit card information to a caller, even if your Caller ID indicates it's a legitimate charity (scammers have ways to make whatever number they want appear on your screen). Say no to offers to send a courier to your home to pick up a donation. Instead, tell the caller to mail you printed information. (If the organization doesn't already have your address, do not provide it. Why tell a strange caller where you live?) Although mailed material is no guarantee of legitimacy, organizations that won't provide it are usually scams. So once you get the paperwork, see if the contact information and mailing address match what you find with your own online search or the verification websites noted above. Or simply look up the number of the charity yourself and call it.



This year the **National Night Out** has been moved to October 6th because of the virus concerns.

Does Neighborhood Watch work?

If you have ever wondered if Neighborhood Watch works here in Columbia, just look at the chart below and judge for yourself.



This data shows that it is working here in Columbia,

Neighborhood Awareness: The Key to Crime Prevention

A good neighbor can be one of the best crime prevention tools. This is especially true at this time of the year when various criminals and con artists use the warm weather to take advantage of residents, particularly the elderly. Watchful eyes in the neighborhood can spot criminals and alert police and the community to their presence.

Keep a check on your neighbors. If, for example, you see an elderly resident in conversation with a stranger, politely inquire about what is going on. If residents see strangers sizing up their neighbor's home, that could also be a sign something is wrong. A call to 311 will get an officer to the scene to check things out. Involvement such as this builds stronger bonds between neighbors, and helps maintain safe neighborhoods

Board Member Opening:

We currently have an opening for three new Board Members.

If you are interested in one of the positions please email us at col.neighwatch@gmail.com with Board Opening in the subject line.

Help us by using Amazon Smile and name Columbia Neighborhood Watch as who you want them to donate to at no cost to you.

The logo for Amazon Smile, featuring the word "amazon" in black and "smile" in orange, with a curved orange arrow underneath "amazon" pointing to the right.

The Crime Risk vs. Reward

Criminals definitely weigh risk versus reward when they're thinking of committing a crime. They may not realize they're doing it but they weigh this every time they consider stealing something from you or breaking into your home. It's the path of least resistance.

Even an amateur crook will case or check out an area before he commits a crime. This is the perfect opportunity for you to create some deterrent so he or she can make a decision to go somewhere else. That is where crime prevention training is important.

Fact: It isn't that likely that crime will ever go away. At some level there will always be someone who will take the opportunity to steal from someone else. The simple idea of risk versus reward is that homeowners have the opportunity to affect the decision the burglar or thief makes to select their home or go somewhere else. Again, it's the path of least resistance. This is the key to deterring a criminal from picking you as his or her victim.

The problem is that when you actually deter a crime, you never know it. It's the good things that you do over and over without seeing the result that will put you on the "lower risk" list.

Joke:

A lady who was speeding had an officer pull her to the side of the road. She didn't have her seat belt on so as soon as she stopped, she quickly slipped it on before the officer got to her window.

After talking to her about speeding, the officer said, "I see you are wearing your seat belt. Do you believe in wearing it at all times?"

"Yes, I do, officer," she replied.

"Well," asked the officer, "do you always do it up with it looped through your steering wheel?"
