



YOUR Community, YOUR Neighbors
OUR RESPONSIBILITY
get involved today

Columbia Neighborhood Watch

December 2025

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SEASONS GREETINGS

FROM YOUR

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH BOARD

A special thanks to our members who serve as Captains and Co-Captains.

It is your dedication that makes
Neighborhood Watch work.

COLUMBIA NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Highlights from Officer McClintic

THEFT PREVENTION TIPS RELAYED FROM THE COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT'S CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION:

#1 thing to protect yourself is to lock your car doors and close your garage doors.

Groups of people (mostly juveniles) walk around at night and check car doors and enter open garage doors. If the doors are locked, they usually keep moving until they find easier targets.

Scammers often trick their victims into sending gift cards, itunes cards, or Google play cards. They claim the funds can be used to pay for missed jury duty, taxes, bail, debt collections, or towards fees to pay for computer virus protection. Scammers also contact their victims via email, text, or facebook and pretend to be a friend and ask for gift cards.

The scammers express the need for quick action. They tell their victims not to tell anyone what they are doing, and that they will be arrested if they hang up or don't cooperate.

If a friend has asked you to buy them gift cards, please talk to that friend in person or over the phone before you purchase any.

Government agencies will not ask for gift cards as payment for fines or bail.

If you think someone is trying to steal your money with one of these scams, please call 311 to have an officer contact you for more potential report details.

Protect your packages from porch pirates

Shiver me timbers, it's that time of year when porch pirates steal packages from front doors.

As the holiday season approaches and package deliveries increase, thieves will be taking advantage of easy targets left on front doorsteps. Here are tips for preventing porch pirates from getting away with their ill-gotten booty:

1. If you're usually not home when packages are delivered, have them shipped to an address where someone is available to accept them. Most UPS stores will receive and hold packages, and FedEx will deliver to its stores as well as Walgreens and Dollar General stores. Visit the carriers' websites or call their local stores for more information. Another way is to ship them to a relative's or friend's address – with their permission, of course, and only if they'll be home.
2. Cameras on front porches are as common as doorbells, and some cameras even double as doorbells. Video evidence helps law enforcement track and catch culprits. When you're alerted to someone at your door, and it's a carrier making a delivery, take the package inside as soon as possible. Thieves sometimes discreetly follow delivery trucks and steal packages just minutes after delivery.
3. A porch lock box or parcel safe box will deter package thefts. The box shouldn't attract attention yet have a capacity of at least 26 by 18 by 15 inches, which carriers say is the typical size for a package. It should be sturdy and made of metal.
4. You can avoid porch pirates altogether by shopping at brick-and-mortar stores. Remember to keep purchases out of sight inside your vehicle. This time of year, thieves will be prowling parking lots as well as front porches.

Security camera registration program enhances public safety

The Columbia Police Department invites residents to participate in its Camera Registration Program, a community-driven initiative to strengthen public safety throughout Columbia.

When you register your home or business security camera with the Columbia Police Department, you become an essential partner in community safety. This voluntary program creates a database that helps officers and detectives respond more effectively during investigations.

Key benefits of registration

Crime prevention: Serves as a deterrent to potential criminal activity in registered areas

Improved investigation efficiency: Allows police to identify camera locations that might have captured evidence

Community partnership: Strengthens the relationship between residents and public safety professionals

How It Works

Registration is voluntary and does not give police direct access to your camera or footage. It simply informs the department of your camera's location. If an incident occurs in your area, officers or detectives may contact you to request footage to assist their investigation.

Join Your Neighbors in Making Columbia Safer

By registering your camera, you're taking an active role in protecting our community. To register your security camera, visit <https://refer.flocksafety.com/community/columbia-safe>.

Boone County Ready Festival

September was National Preparedness Month and the Neighborhood Watch Board participated.



About the Event

Boone County OEM hosted the annual, community-wide **Boone County Ready Festival on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at Cosmo Park in Columbia.** This event recognizes everyday heroes in the response and preparedness fields while fostering preparedness and building resiliency in our community.

Daniel Credeur was the winner of the \$30 Red Lobster gift card!

Code Corner: Residential Code Cases in FY2024

Neighborhood Services, part of the City's Housing & Neighborhood Services Department, handled 5,957 residential code issues in the City's 2024 fiscal year ending September 30. This is a 12% increase from the previous year. Solid Waste cases including roll cart violations and trash out early made up the largest number with 2,056 followed by landscape management (tall grass and weeds) at 1,364 and health nuisance cases at 854. Resident complaints accounted for about a third of the cases with the remainder proactively identified by staff.

Neighborhood Services referred 119 cases to the municipal prosecutor when escalated enforcement was required.

Neighborhood Services is also responsible for rental housing compliance and ended the year with 28,282 units and 9,690 buildings in compliance. In 2024, staff responded to 300 tenant complaints.

Residential code enforcement has a connection with community safety. Abandoned and neglected properties may attract criminal activity and lower property value. Properties with code violations may also indicate other illegal activity occurring.

If there is an issue Neighborhood Services can assist with, contact us at 874-CITY or neighborhood@CoMo.gov.

As we approach the holiday season, it is important to be aware of the rise in fraudulent websites that capitalize on Black Friday deals to scam unsuspecting consumers. Cybercriminals are increasingly targeting shoppers by creating convincing yet malicious websites offering “too good to be true” deals. These websites can be used to steal sensitive information that they can then leverage in various ways, including keeping your data to target you for future attacks.

Fake websites thrive on major consumer events, like Black Friday, where some consumers can be so eager for discounts that they sometimes overlook the security of the websites that they are shopping on. These sites often mimic legitimate retail brands, featuring attractive offers that seem legitimate at first glance.

How to stay safe:

1. **Double-check website URLs:** Make sure the site uses HTTPS; if a webpage does not use HTTPS, you’ll see a message saying that the site is “Not secure” in the URL field.
2. **Avoid Unrealistic Deals:** If it is too good to be true, then it probably is.
3. **Beware of Social Media Ads:** Be cautious about clicking links from unknown social media accounts or pop-up ads promoting Black Friday deals.
4. **Make sure the device you are shopping on is up to date:** Regardless of the device that you are using to shop for those deals, make sure that you update it to the latest release/version.
5. **Use Trusted Payment Methods:** Stick to reputable payment methods (such as Credit Cards or PayPal) that offer buyer protection in case of fraud.

By staying vigilant and following these tips, you can protect yourself from fraud and enjoy a safe shopping experience this holiday season.

Speaker is available

Just a reminder, if your organization or neighborhood would like a speaker, we can provide an informative talk on Neighborhood Watch from 20 minutes to as little as 5 minutes. We will answer any questions your members may have. To arrange, please contact us at: col.neighwatch@gmail.com

Show your support for our Police. To raise awareness we are selling “Back the Blue” signs for your yard or window at a cost of \$20 which is considered a charitable donation to a 502(c)3 organization.



The sign will be delivered and can be purchased on our website or click below.

Control click the button below

[PURCHASE SIGN](#)



Greetings to all from the Columbia/Boone County Crimestoppers Board. We are excited that our new on-line anonymous report has generated several tips. We have gone from 1 or 2 tips a month to nearly 50 tips a month. We have also created a new way for you to make donations to Crimestoppers. Our rewards are from donations that are made by businesses or the general public. We encourage anyone who wants to donate, they can do so by going to our website at 875tips.com.

We are in the process on starting a new program to assist our Law Enforcement Partners that we will be rolling out in 2026. So, look forward to seeing our new program.

The Crimestoppers Board will not hold meetings in November or December because of the Holidays. So, we would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving , a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay Safe! And just remember, " We know, that you know, something we would like to know."

Remember our motto, "If You See Something, Say Something!" You'll Remain Anonymous and You can receive a reward UP TO \$2,500.00 leading to an arrest on any felony related charge. Call 573.875.TIPS or go to 875tips.com!

Crime stoppers Board Officers:

John Fields, President
Matt Garrett, Vice President
Terry Robb, Secretary
Karen Taylor, Treasurer

Tips from UPS, FedEx

With holiday deliveries ramping up, package theft is on the rise. Here's how to keep your doorstep safe, straight from the experts at UPS and FedEx—plus a few local-friendly tips from your Neighborhood Watch team.

☐ **Use Carrier Tools to Stay in Control**

- **UPS My Choice®:** Get alerts, reschedule deliveries, or redirect packages to a secure UPS Access Point (like CVS or Michaels).

FedEx Delivery Manager®: Customize delivery times, require a signature, or hold packages at FedEx Office or Walgreens.

☐☐ **Smart Steps to Protect Your Packages**

- **Require a Signature:** At checkout, select “signature required” to avoid unattended drop-offs.
- **Install a Lockable Parcel Box:** Secure drop boxes like the Hyve or BenchSentry keep packages out of sight and locked up.
- **Use Security Cameras:** Visible cameras deter theft and help with evidence if needed.
- **Track Deliveries Closely:** Enable real-time alerts and retrieve packages promptly.

Redirect to Trusted Neighbors: If you're away, ask a neighbor to accept your delivery.

☐ **Safer Pickup Options**

- **Amazon Locker / UPS Access Point / FedEx Hold at Location:** Choose secure pickup locations instead of home delivery.

Smart Parcel Boxes: Tech-enabled boxes notify you when a package arrives and lock automatically.

☐ **Watch Out for Suspicious Activity**

- Report unfamiliar vehicles tailing delivery trucks or lingering near porches.
- Share alerts with neighbors via text or your local Watch group.
- Encourage neighbors to retrieve packages quickly and avoid overnight exposure.

Let's keep Columbia's porches pirate-free! Share these tips with friends, post them on your block's bulletin board, or include them in your HOA updates.

If your package is stolen, both UPS and FedEx recommend confirming delivery, documenting the loss, and filing a claim promptly—ideally within 60 days of shipment.

Here's a step-by-step guide based on their official policies:

□ **What to Do If Your UPS Package Is Stolen**

1. **Confirm Delivery Status**

- Check the tracking number to verify that the package was marked “Delivered.” Sometimes packages are left in hidden spots or delivered to neighbors.
- 1.
 - **Check with Neighbors or Household Members**
 - Ask if anyone accepted the package or saw it being delivered.
 -
 - **Document the Theft**
 - Save your tracking info, shipping receipts, and proof of value (invoice or appraisal). Take photos of the delivery area if relevant.
 -
 - **File a Claim with UPS**
 - Visit the [UPS Claims page](#) to start the process. Claims must be filed within **60 days of the shipment date**.
- **Contact the Seller**
- Many retailers will offer a refund or replacement if the package was stolen after delivery.
-

□ What to Do If Your FedEx Package Is Stolen

1. Verify Delivery

- Use your tracking number to confirm the package was delivered. FedEx sometimes leaves packages in less visible areas.

1.

• Gather Documentation

- Keep your tracking info, shipping receipts, and proof of item value. You can start the claim and upload documents later.

• File a Claim with FedEx

- Go to the [FedEx Claims Center](#) and submit your claim. U.S. claims must be filed within **60 calendar days** of the shipment date.

• Contact the Retailer

- **Some sellers may offer a refund or replacement depending on their shipping terms.**

□□ Additional Tips

- **File a Police Report** if the value is significant or if theft is recurring in your area.
 - **Check Homeowners or Renters Insurance**—some policies cover stolen deliveries.
 - **Use Carrier Tools** like UPS My Choice® or FedEx Delivery Manager® to redirect or hold packages securely.
-

Suspicious activities can now be reported online to the Columbia Police Department **instead of calling 311** if you would care to do so. To report the activities, you would go to:

<https://columbiapolice.policetocitizen.com/reportIncident#report> and fill out the form.

Columbia Neighborhood Watch's ANNUAL REPORT 2025

<p>Columbia Neighborhood Watch 503 E. Nifong, #183 Columbia, MO 65201-</p>	<p>Phone: 573-874-7426</p>	<p>Email: col.neighwatch@gmail.com Website: columbianeighborhoodwatch.org</p>
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Mission Statement:

The mission of Columbia Neighborhood Watch is to inform, train and encourage residents to work together to establish neighborhood watch programs with the goal of reducing crime and increasing public safety."

Some highlights were:

Update Captains list – being worked on, but is an ongoing task

Continue to improve the Training Power Point - We have updated the Power Point numerous times and will continue to update as needed.

Training sessions –

We have completed 12 Public training, resulting in 160 new members.
4 Private training, resulting in 100 new members.
For a total of 260 new members.

Attend at least one public event.

We have attended 4 Public events, including National Night Out and will be attending the Ready Festival on Sept 18th.

Special events

Board member have attended 7 Special events this past year.

Apply for grants - Being done. We have applied for 6 grants. We won 3, 1 was denied and we are waiting for answers back on 2 grant requests.

Send Thank You to new Captains/ Co-Captains - Being done, we thank all Captains and Co-Captains each year through our Newsletter. In addition, we have 2 board members that are assigned as Captain Liaisons.

Send Newsletter Quarterly - Being Done

In addition to these goals the Board addressed several other items.

Our Budget.

The City of Columbia, through the Police Department, has given us a "Purchase of Service Contract".

We continue to earned the **Better Business Bureau accreditation** and have won the **Torch Award** by the Better Business Bureau. In addition, we have been upgraded to the **Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid** and have earned **accreditation by Charity Navigator**.

Board member donated their time to the tune of over 4572 hours which calculates out to **\$159,059.88** of in-kind service to Columbia Neighborhood Watch.

We are continuing with the Email Service Has allowed us to contact all of our members.

Helped us to keep our membership Roster up to date. (We have found the residents are very mobile and a number of members have moved out of Columbia.)

Revenues	
Business Contributions	\$ 484.81
In Kind Donations	\$ 3,868.01
Public donations	\$ 320.00
Misc - interest, etc	\$ 173.26
Gerbes	\$ 102.65
City of Columbia	\$10,000
Total revenues and support	\$ 14,948.73
Reserves funds	\$ 7,051.86
Expenses	
Signs & Brackets	\$ -
Promotional Items	\$ 2,107.00
copying	\$ 200.00
Email services	\$ 364.50
Website & Social Media	\$ 1,000.00
Insurance & general expenses	\$ 2,500.00
Computers & Software	\$ 567.00
Registratio Fees	\$ 44.81
Training Booklets	\$ 3,798.95
Board Shirts	\$ 185.20
Advertising	\$ 100.00
Merchant fees	\$ 18.47
Fees	\$ 11.25
Mail & postage	\$ 120.00
Other	\$ 96.95
Mail Service box	\$ 117.00
Fundraising expenses	\$ 175.00
Total expenses	\$ 11,406.13
Net assets at end of year	\$ 10,594.46
Beginning balance	\$ 7,051.96
Ending balance	\$ 10,594.46
Minus in Kind	\$ 3,868.01
Accual ending Balance	\$ 6,756.45

Board of Directors

Herb Watchinski President	Keith Caldwell Treasurer	Rod Perry
Jeffrey Hempstead Vice President	Ibrahim Ajiserere	Larry Kirschner
Susan Dickerson Secretary	Paul Corbin	Nancy Corbin

Advisors: Irwin Schneider and Spring Walton

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