

January-March
2010

Zone 4 News



Resident Beat Officer Robert Primak / 708.305.9780 / primak@oak-park.us

ZONE 4 BORDERS:

Austin, Oak Park,
Madison, and South
Blvd.

ZONE 4 MEETINGS

The 2nd Wednesday of
every month at 7:00pm
at Percy Julian Middle
School, 416 S.
Ridgeland.

MCGRUFF HOMES

McGruff Houses provide
safe locations in
neighborhoods where
children can seek
nearby assistance if
they feel threatened or
scared. Please consider
making your home a
McGruff House. For
more information,
please contact Officer
Primak.

Happy New Year

I'd like to take the opportunity of a new year to revisit the topic of Neighborhood Watch groups. Neighborhood watch programs are organized to promote a partnership between police and the community to work together to make neighborhoods more crime resistant. This partnership exemplifies the intent of community policing and the Resident Beat Officer program. If anyone who would like to help me revitalize neighborhood watch on their block give me a call.

Blow a Whistle Stop a Crime

We recently received a limited supply of whistles sponsored by Community Bank. The goal of the Blow a Whistle, Stop a Crime program is to give individuals another tool for letting everyone within earshot know that someone needs help and to call 9-1-1. Preventing crime is not about just having police officers everywhere, all the time. The most important tools

of crime prevention are alert citizens who are willing to get involved. You don't even need a whistle to get involved in the program – you only have to call 9-1-1 immediately if you hear a whistle being blown. If you would like more information on the program give me a call or go to <http://www.oak-park.us/Police> and click on the whistle.

Seasonal Crime Tips

- **Motor vehicle theft..**Many autos are reported stolen during colder months after being left unattended to warm up, unlocked and running with the keys in the ignition. This can happen on the street, in a garage or while making a quick stop at a store. Leaving a running vehicle unattended not only increases its risk of being stolen, it also is a violation of state law.
- **Auto burglaries..** Packages and valuables left visible in

autos – even if it is locked – are an invitation to thieves who may be willing to damage the vehicle to get at them. And if you have to make multiple trips from your car to your home to unload, be alert – especially if the trunk or a door must be left open.

- **Package theft..**If you are expecting deliveries, make arrangements with friends, family or neighbors so that packages will not be left out where thieves

can see and get them.

- **Pickpockets and thieves..**While out shopping or dining take care with purses, bags and wallets. Thieves like bags and purses hanging on chair backs, left in shopping carts, sitting unattended or simply put down while the owner answers a telephone or is otherwise distracted.
- Please report any suspicious activity. Call 9-1-1 in an emergency. Non-emergencies call 708.386.2131.

Oak Park Police
123 Madison Street,
Oak Park, IL 60302

**IMPORTANT
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS**

9-1-1 Emergency

**708.386.2131
to have an officer
dispatched in a non-
emergency situation**

**708.386.3800
to talk with a police
supervisor**

**708.434.1636
Crime Tip Hotline**

**708.358.5445
Excessive debris /
litter in alleys &
private property-John
Ross**

**708.358.5708
Excessive litter on
public property-Vince
Bryant**

**708.358.5429
Graffiti Hotline**

**708.358.5700
Street light outages
Public Works**

**708.358.5405
Community Relations**

Online Crime Maps

Keep up to date with what is going on in our zone by checking the crime reports posted by the Oak Park Police Department. Go to <http://www.oak-park.us/Police/index.html> and click on the crime reports tab. For those without access to the internet or if anyone has a question about the reports please give me a call.

Block Captains

The Oak Park Police Department is currently looking for persons interested in being Block Captains. The Block Captain might aid in the dissemination of important information to their neighbors, perhaps by maintaining an e-mail

School Bus Safety

All too often people disregard school buses while they load and unload children. Illinois law requires that vehicles travelling in either direction must stop before reaching a school bus that has its flashing lights and stop signal arm extended. You must remain stopped until the stop signal arm is no longer extended and the flashing lights are turned off, or the driver

signals you to pass. An exception is on a roadway with four or more lanes, at least two lanes of traffic in each direction and you are travelling in the opposite direction of the bus, but you should still drive cautiously.

Your driving privileges will be suspended for three months if you are convicted of illegally passing a stopped school bus.

distribution list or possibly hosting a neighborhood watch meeting from time to time. Anyone in Zone 4 who is interested should contact Resident Beat Officer Robert Primak at 708.305.9780 or e-mail primak@oak-park.us. Or, if you know of someone

on your block that you think might be a good choice, speak to them about giving me a call.

Text Messaging / Cell Phone Laws

Effective in January 2010, the State of Illinois has implemented some new driving laws.

Texting or sending e-mail while driving is now illegal in Illinois. Drivers may not use any electronic communication device to compose, send, or read an electronic message.

Don't worry about getting lost however, because the law makes an exception for navigation systems.

Although the State of Illinois does not currently completely ban the use of cellular phones while driving (restrictions for graduated drivers license holders, school bus drivers and certain municipalities), it is now illegal to use a wireless phone while driving in certain areas. No person, regardless of age may use a wireless telephone in a school speed zone, construction zone, or maintenance speed zone. So if you're

planning to call your children as you arrive at the school to pick them up, wait until you've found a parking spot, or you might get a ticket. For additional information on the full text of the laws, restrictions and exceptions go to the Illinois Secretary of State web site and www.ilga.gov Illinois Compiled Statutes chapter 625 (vehicles).