



The BLOTTER

Your place for up to date Police information

Preventable Thefts?

As we are all well aware the weather is changing and the cold has arrived. I was working overtime downtown yesterday and watched a newspaper delivery person going about their day. They pulled up and parked near a busy intersection and ran to make a delivery at a nearby business. I watched in surprise as she left her vehicle running and unlocked. From my vantage point, at a nearby business, I thought for sure I would be witnessing a vehicle theft. She was gone for no more than two minutes and returned to her car to continue working.

Fast forward to today when I was out assisting patrol with 911 calls. I was getting back to my office to write this newsletter and I hear dispatch give out a call of a vehicle theft. The reporting party was stating his vehicle stolen after he left it running outside for an hour and a half. This is actually a common report taken by Patrol Officers during the winter months.

We have many calls like this every year and they are **ALL** preventable. The owners of the cars end up without a vehicle, their insurance rates likely go up, they can't make it to work or bring kids to school, the police spend a considerable amount of time completing lengthy reports, investigating thefts, and completing more reports when the vehicle is

recovered. Did I mention these thefts are 100% preventable?



I was ending my shift when I heard a partner of mine radio that she was out with this stolen vehicle. I responded to assist and we eventually took the driver into custody. During the course of that investigation we discovered that the vehicle was involved in a "hit and run" crash after being stolen. There was damage all the way down the driver's side. This is another report and an innocent person's vehicle was damaged as well. So, after it was all said and one there were three reports completed by three different Officers, a total of 6 Officers involved in the various calls created by this and two vehicles involved in a crash. Not to mention one person went to jail. All of this was PREVENTABLE.



Technically there is a City Ordinance that prohibits leaving the ignition keys in an unattended car (33.91). I understand that life gets busy and it's much nicer to get into a warm vehicle, but we cannot allow ourselves to fall victim to thieves! So, if you are the person who has been leaving their vehicle running with the keys in the ignition, please stop. We don't want you to fall on any hardship because of it, however, if something happens and you need us, we are only a phone call away!

Keeping Downtown Safe - A Community Approach

We are a community downtown. All of us - the people who work here, the people who live here, and the people who play here. We all have ownership in this community and need to do our part when we see things that damage the perception of safety and the quality of life. This is our community! So many people will ask "what can I do?"

This article is meant to give you a basic understanding of how the Police Department learns of crime trends, or a pattern of unsafe behaviors. We truly rely on you, the citizens, to let us know when and where things are happening.

If you see something say something. This may sound simple, and that's because it is. If you see things in your community that do not seem right, say something. Maybe it's a phone call to Clean and Safe or a call to 911. Maybe it's an email to me relaying information. There are many entities in the downtown area that exist to provide a safe

Duluth for all. Clean and Safe, the Police Department, and Parks and Recreation are just a few!! Often times there can be a disconnect between the community and these organizations, so if you see something, say something. We cannot fix issues if we do not know they exist!

Calling 911 and what really happens

Many times citizens will see something that looks like it might be illegal, unsafe or suspicious, but at the same time do not think it is serious enough to call 911. In many communities there are "non-emergency" numbers to call and report incidents. We do not have such a thing here, and 911 is used to report everything from a traffic hazard to a serious crime. If you call 911 and it is not a Police Department or Fire Department issue, they will gladly guide you in the right direction to work with a different entity and resolve your issue.

Please call when you see things happening, not hours or days later. We would like the best opportunity to address behaviors and situations when they are happening. It allows us to more effectively address the behaviors and create change.

A huge part of calling 911 is documentation. It was said in a report writing class I took in college, “If you don’t document it, it didn’t happen”. I cannot stress the importance documenting incidents with an accurate time, location and account of what happened. Be a good witness, but do not get involved in situations. Be prepared to get asked a lot of questions by the Call Taker in the 911 center. They will ask what is happening, where it is happening, descriptions of people involved, and so on. The more detail you can provide, the better. The 911 Call Taker is doing their best to ask a lot of questions in a short amount of time and get the most detail possible. Their job is to “paint a picture” for the responding units so they know what they are getting into and can formulate a plan while on the way. This is not only for Police, but the Fire Department and Mayo Ambulance as well.

After calling 911 and speaking with a Patrol Officer, hopefully the issue has been addressed. The work does not end there! Let’s say there is an ongoing issue at a particular address and Patrol Officers respond there three times in one week. We have great civilian staff who run reports every week looking for repeat calls for service at addresses. Those addresses are sent to Community Officers, like myself, for review. We look over the calls, see if a pattern exists and if so, attempt to come up with a long term problem solving plan. Again working towards our goal of providing a safe Duluth for all.

If there are times that you would like to let me know of an issue that is ongoing, but not happening at the time, please email or call me! I’d love to stop by and discuss the issues and look at some creative ways to hopefully solve the issue you are facing. The entire Police Department and I are here for you, please do not ever hesitate to call us. You deserve the highest level of service from our agency!

Every. Interaction. Leaves. A. Lasting. Impression.