



A Crime Prevention Program of  
The Springfield Township Police

# Neighborhood Watch Committee

- ▶ Sgt. Rebecca Mersky-Chairperson
- ▶ Ofc. Samuel Boone
- ▶ Ofc. Joseph DiSantis
- ▶ Ofc. R. Calvin Wiley
- ▶ Ofc. Edward Gross

# Agenda

- ▶ What is a suspicious person?
- ▶ What is a suspicious vehicle?
- ▶ Other unusual situations
- ▶ When to call 9-1-1
- ▶ What to expect when you call 9-1-1
- ▶ Things to do when you call 9-1-1
- ▶ Safety Tips
- ▶ Q & A

# What is a SUSPICIOUS PERSON?

Is it how someone looks or is it how someone behaves?



# What is a suspicious person?

- ▶ **PEOPLE AREN'T SUSPICIOUS, BEHAVIOR IS!**
  - ▶ Unfamiliar
  - ▶ Loitering
- ▶ Suspicion is a gut feeling that something is wrong. If it feels wrong, it is probably wrong.
- ▶ Someone acting suspicious does not, by definition, make them a criminal. Let us check.

# How do I identify a person as suspicious ?

## ▶ People Running

- ✗ Are they in a hurry or do they have a heightened sense of urgency or tension.
- ✗ Are they looking about furtively, as if being observed or pursued.
- ✗ How are they dressed (legitimate jogging or fleeing the scene of a crime).

## ▶ Carrying Property (Running or Walking)

- ▶ Unusual hour or location.
- ▶ Concealing items under clothing.

# How do I identify a person as suspicious ?

- ▶ Someone waiting in front of a house, particularly if owners are absent.
- ▶ Loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood.
- ▶ A child resisting the advances of an adult.
- ▶ Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms may be under the influence.
- ▶ Posing as utility personnel without uniforms or proper ID.

# Canvassing and Soliciting in Springfield

- Must Register with Police Department
  - Must have ID issued by Springfield Police.
  - Must produce ID upon request.
- No Soliciting after 9:00 PM
- Current approved solicitors are listed with the police department





# What is a suspicious vehicle?

Is it how the vehicle looks or is it what the vehicle is / is not doing?



# What is a suspicious vehicle?

- ▶ Seeing the same vehicle “cruising” the area for an unknown purpose.
- ▶ Moving slowly and/or driving without lights on.
- ▶ Leaving the area at a high rate of speed.
- ▶ Vehicle parked in a remote area.
- ▶ Apparent business transactions conducted from vehicle, especially around parks or schools and if juveniles are involved.

# What is a suspicious vehicle?

- ▶ **Property in Vehicle**
  - ▶ TVs, Laptops, Pillow Cases, or items not commonly seen in a car in that circumstance.
- ▶ **Unusual Activity Involving Vehicle**
  - ▶ Forcible entry of a locked vehicle (Broken Glass).
  - ▶ Trying numerous door handles or walking between cars with no purpose or defined direction.
    - ▶ Fitness clubs, day cares, parks
  - ▶ One or more persons sitting in a parked car closely scanning the area. Are they lookouts or casing the area?



**When ski masks and panel vans get together there are never good intentions involved**

# Other Unusual Situations

- ▶ A person switching vehicles in a public place, could be “dumping” a stolen vehicle or one that was used in a crime.
- ▶ Continuous “repair” operations at a non-business location.
- ▶ Open or broken doors or windows at a closed business or residence.
- ▶ Unusual noises such as barking dog, screaming, sounds of a struggle or gunshots.

# Your observations and calling 9-1-1

- ▶ **Talking Points:**
  - ▶ Your safety comes first!!
  - ▶ Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1. Trust your instincts!
  - ▶ Write it down.
  - ▶ When to call 9-1-1.
  - ▶ What to expect when you call 9-1-1.
  - ▶ What the caller should do when calling 9-1-1.

# YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST!!!!

- ▶ Observe and Report.
- ▶ Do not confront. That's for the police to do.
- ▶ Always be in a safe place when calling 9-1-1

# When to call 9-1-1

- ▶ Any life threatening situation
  - ▶ Medical Emergency - Fire
- ▶ Serious crime in progress
  - ▶ Robbery, burglary, assault
- ▶ OR - Anytime a police response is needed (including quality of life issues)
- ▶ You Are Not Bothering Us when you call 9-1-1





# Write it Down

- ▶ Write down anything you can remember. (Do not rely on your memory)
- ▶ Be as precise as you can and avoid guessing.
  - ▶ Incorrect information is worse than no information!
- ▶ Trust your instincts. Don't hesitate to call if you think something is wrong.
- ▶ Do not worry about being embarrassed, even if your suspicions turn out to be unfounded, think of what could happen if you don't act.



# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU CALL

- ▶ Nature of the emergency - what is going on now, description of subject or vehicle, any weapons involved, how long ago did the incident occur.
- ▶ Location - need exact address, location, place, name, intersection.
- ▶ Your name and phone number
- ▶ Are you available to speak to the police?
  - ▶ If not immediately available, provide a way to contact you later.

# What should you (the caller) do?

- ▶ Remain calm and speak clearly.
- ▶ Be prepared to answer who, what when, where, and how.
- ▶ Let the call taker ask the questions.
- ▶ Answer as well as you can.
- ▶ Don't make guesses!
- ▶ Report what you have observed.

# WHAT SHOULD YOU (THE CALLER) DO?

- ▶ Stay on the phone if it is safe to do so or until the call taker advises you to hang up.
- ▶ INADVERTENTLY DIALED 9-1-1?
  - ▶ Do not hang up.
  - ▶ Advise call taker it was a mistake.

# Some 9-1-1 Issues

- ▶ Not all cell phones will give location.
- ▶ Cell phone used near the border of other communities may connect you to that community and not Montgomery County.
- ▶ Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) - in some cases the location of the caller cannot always be determined.

# Safety Tips for Joggers & Dog Walkers

- ▶ Be alert of your surroundings while exercising or walking your dog.
- ▶ Carry a cell phone to report concerns.
- ▶ Carry a notepad or pen to jot down information.
- ▶ Consider a reflective collar for your dog and a safety vest for yourself.

**Remember... Observe and Report ... DO NOT CONFRONT!**

# QUESTIONS?

