

Block Watcher

A Newsletter for Block Watch Captains

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Issue



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- Did you know...?

Take a quick quiz and find answers that might be news to you!



Questions or comments?
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Fall/Winter Home Safety Tips

Suddenly fall is well upon us and the frost is here to stay.

Fall and winter months bring more hours of darkness, inclement weather and more treacherous traveling conditions.

With that in mind, it makes sense to plan ahead and safeguard your home, vehicle and property from some common safety hazards.

Below is a list of safety tips pertaining to the home, followed by a short article addressing winter driving.

Remembering to perform checks on these items each fall will help prepare you in the winter months to come.

At Home:

- Check and lube all exterior door locks
- Install deadbolts on exterior doors
- Check all exterior lights and replace inoperable bulbs
- Ensure that all exterior lights are housed in enclosed fixtures (so that they cannot be unscrewed or otherwise tampered with)
- Check or install exterior locks on all sheds, garages and gates
- Install wooden or plastic window blocks to supplement locking windows

- Check batteries in smoke detectors, alarms etc
- Trim back all trees, shrubbery etc that has become overgrown and obstructs views to the exterior or walkways
- Check stability of all exterior handrails on steps, porches and decks
- Make sure that porches and pathways are well lit



Winter Weather Driving

Stay with your car as it warms up. Too often vehicles are stolen while left unattended and running.

Accident rates increase this time of the year due to the driving conditions.

Here are some basic tips to remember for winter driving:

1. Clean off all windows

first. This may mean you need to plan for more time beforehand, think ahead!

2. Know the weather. Check with local TV, radio and newspapers. You can also call **511** for phone recorded weather briefings.

3. Always use your turn signals.
4. Drive with your headlights on.
5. Allow for greater stopping distance. It usually takes 3 times longer to stop when the roads are wet, icy or snow covered.

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Check out the revamped City of
Bellingham Web at
cob.org

Winter Weather Driving (cont.)

6. Do not look directly into oncoming headlights.
7. Try to anticipate others action, give them plenty of space. Do not follow too closely.
8. Consider public transportation during difficult driving conditions.
9. When the roadways become too hazardous to drive, *stay home*.



Did you know...?

The best part about working in crime prevention is that you get an opportunity to share some great resources with people in the community.

I am always amazed to find that there are a lot of laws out there that citizens aren't aware of. Most of these refer to municipal code violations that may be more of a nuisance than a crime.

Below is a quick quiz about some of these laws.

True/False

1. You must have garbage service in the City of Bellingham.
2. I can call the police about cars parked for two weeks on the street in front of my house.
3. There is nothing I can do about the moldy couch in the neighbor's front yard.

4. I have no way of verifying the legitimacy of a solicitor.
5. I just have to live with the noise from my neighbor's car engine revving while he works on it in his garage.

Answers:

1. True. Having no service is a violation under section 9 of the city Health and Sanitation code. Call our litter control officer at 676-6859 to report violations.
2. True. The law requires that vehicles parked on the city right of way be moved every 24 hrs. For violations or abandoned cars, call police reception at 676-6920.
3. False. Furniture is defined as "refuse" under city code. Call litter control and an officer will make contact with the residents about leaving unwanted furniture

in their yard.

4. False. All persons soliciting, canvassing or telephone soliciting need a license. Licenses are issued through the city finance dept with the approval of the police dept. Violators who solicit without a license are subject to a \$1,500 fine.
5. False. Public noise ordinance defines any ongoing, repetitive noise associated with a motor vehicle that "disturbs the peace and repose" of neighbors as a violation. You could contact the neighbor yourself or call 676-6911 to have an officer respond. This would be an example where having a good relationship with your neighbor would be helpful...how active is your Block Watch?

