

Reasons for not Reporting Suspected Criminal Activity

- It's not my business (but you may be the next victim).
- Someone else may be reporting it (but maybe not).
- The police are too busy (but that's what they're there for).
- That noise may not be anything (but if so, why did it attract your attention?).
- That unknown person may be visiting the neighbors (but maybe not--it's best to be certain).
- That strange car may just be lost (but there may be an abduction about to occur).
- The stranger at your door seems friendly, he was just lost (but this is how burglars determine if anyone is home).
- I could be wrong, and there is no crime occurring (but the police don't mind checking it out-sometimes criminals are even caught in the act).
- The criminals might return to terrorize me if I report them (but if you don't take a stand and report crime, you will live a life of fear from crime).
- I don't care what happens off my property (but apathy breeds crime).
- It's the police department's job, not mine (but the police depend on citizens to be their "eyes and ears").
- I'm the victim and I don't want to report it because it was just a minor theft (but it could be part of a bigger problem and the police need to know about it).

Revised 10/08
PWC Print Shop

How to call the Police

- 1) Dial 9-1-1 for an emergency, or (703) 792-6500 for a non-emergency.
- 2) Quickly describe why you are calling.
- 3) Give your name, address, and phone number.
- 4) Give detailed suspect or vehicle description and last known location or direction of travel.
- 5) Stay calm. If needed, remain on the phone to give additional information.

Note the following when you meet the Officer:

Date and Time: _____

Officer's Name: _____

Case Number: _____

Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
TDD# (703) 792-6294

**Police Non-Emergency
(703) 792-6500**

**Fire Rescue Police
Emergency Dial
9-1-1**

**Crime Prevention Unit
(703) 792-7270**

Crime Reporting



**Prince William County
Police Department**

**Crime Prevention Unit
crimeprevention@pwcgov.org**

Why Should I Call the Police?

The battle against crime is one which involves both police and citizens. The police cannot be everywhere. For this reason, the effective functioning of a police department is dependent on citizen cooperation and their resistance to crime. Many crimes would never be committed if more citizens would be alert to suspicious activity and take it upon themselves to notify the police.

When Should I Call the Police?

Whenever you observe suspicious activity, even though you may not be the only observer, call the police. Never rely on someone else to do what you should have done. The police would rather get multiple calls concerning the same incident than none at all.

Often people fail to act because they are not sure if what they are observing is worth reporting. A good rule to follow is when in doubt, call the police immediately. Don't wait to discuss the event with friends or neighbors first. Valuable police response time is lost this way.

Some people are concerned with bothering the police by reporting some suspicious activity that may be nothing at all. However, police would rather come and check it out. Even if there is no crime being committed, the police response may deter someone from committing a crime.

Crime Solvers

If you have knowledge of someone who may have committed a crime, or the location of a wanted criminal, and you are willing to pass this on to the police you may call the PWC Crime Solvers at (703) 670-3700. You need not give your name. If the information leads to an arrest, you could receive a reward of up to \$1,000.

What is Suspicious Activity?

- A stranger around your neighbor's house or a strange truck or car parked at your neighbor's home while they are away.
- The sound of breaking glass.
- Anyone peering into vehicles or removing tags, gasoline, or auto parts.
- An improperly parked car, or parked car with someone in it that seems out of place.
- Someone carrying property such as TVs, stereos, construction tools, or burglary tools.
- Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle or on street corners.
- A constant flow of strangers to and from a particular house on a regular basis, especially at late hours.
- Persons involved in a fight or any loud explosions or screams.
- Door to door solicitors without a properly issued permit, or any stranger knocking at doors (burglars sometimes knock at the door first to see if anyone is at home).
- A vehicle driving slowly through the neighborhood.
- Persons standing around, possibly acting as a lookout.



Burglar in Your Home!

If you return home and believe that someone may have broken in while you were away:

- Leave immediately.
- Go to a neighbor's house and call the Police.
- Wait for the Police, do not re-enter your home.
- Do not touch or disturb anything as it may be valuable to the police as evidence.

Call Priority

To ensure a rapid police response when you need it, the police department has a call priority system. High priority calls get immediate dispatch and response and consist of reports of crimes in progress or just occurred where there is a chance of apprehending a criminal, or where lives may be endangered. Low priority calls consist of reports of crimes that occurred some time ago where no suspects are on the scene. These calls are dispatched based on available police units, and may even be handled by telephone if possible.

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