




Mount Rainier Police Department

Memorandum



May 4, 2009

TO: Mayor & Council
City Manager

FROM: Michael E. Scott 
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Police Chief's Report – May 2009

Crime:

- The Part I crime statistics for the months of January through April are attached for your information and review. The crime numbers show a 22.98% decrease as compared to the same period in 2008. Motor vehicle thefts continue at a 6-year low, down 63% from a year ago. Burglaries and aggravated assaults are down significantly, 43% and 63% respectively. Robberies, consisting mainly of citizen strong arm robberies jumped a bit from last month and now show an 8% increase from 2008. This increase was primarily due to several robberies of citizens in the southern part of the City. On April 27th our officers arrested two individuals for robbing a citizen at 36th and Perry Streets. We believe these two, in addition to a third accomplice may have been responsible for a number of citizen robberies in the area. Since these arrests were made we have not had any additional incidents in the neighborhood.
- Last month I reported that we had experienced a large increase in thefts from auto, centered primarily in the Kaywood Apartments area. These thefts declined during the month of April with only 9 cases reported as opposed to the 26 reported during the month of April 2008. Power shift officers have maintained a significant visible presence in the area throughout the month in order to suppress these thefts and it appears their efforts have been fruitful. We also sized a large quantity of wheel lock keys from an individual as the result of a traffic stop. This person has a long history of thefts from autos and thefts of auto parts and since we seized his tools our reported thefts have declined.
- Beginning on April 18th MRPD power shift officers began participating with Hyattsville PD, Metro Transit PD and the Maryland-National Capital Park Police in a crime reduction task force. The task force was formed primarily to address citizen robberies that have occurred at and around the West Hyattsville Metro Station. The task force also focuses on crime hot spots in our respective jurisdictions. The task force was initially designed to operate through the end of April, but because of its successes we will continue to participate with the other agencies on a continuing monthly basis.
- On Thursday May 7th MRPD will join Councilmember Will Campos and officers from Hyattsville PD, Metro Transit PD and the Maryland-National Capital Park Police in a

pedestrian safety public meeting. The meeting is primarily targeted at pedestrians who frequently use the West Hyattsville Metro Station. The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8 pm at Computer Utopia on Jamestown Road across from the metro station. Metro Transit police have also agreed to host a similar safety meeting at the bus terminal in front of City Hall. We had originally scheduled the meeting for April 22nd but had to cancel due to rain. We hope to get this safety meeting in sometime in the next two weeks, weather permitting.

Red light and Speed Cameras:

- On April 29th the City Manager and I met with a representative of Optotraffic to iron out the final details of our contract to install a red light camera on Rhode Island Avenue. We are hopeful that the camera can be up and running before the end of May. We also had a preliminary discussion about entering into a similar contract to operate speed cameras in three school zones in the City. Based on the requirements of the State's speed camera enabling legislation we would be able to operate speed cameras along north and southbound Rhode Island Avenue; and along Queens Chapel Road - north and southbound - between 25th Street and the City boundary at Northwest Branch.

Pandemic Influenza:

- As of 11 am today (May 4th) the centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports a total of 286 confirmed cases of the Influenza A (H1N1) virus across 36 states in the U.S. Here in Maryland we have 4 confirmed cases with numerous others awaiting CDC test results. Last Friday, in response to the increasing spread of this virus, we contacted the City's CERT Coordinator and obtained printed and electronic versions of an H1N1 informational document entitled "What You Need to Know about Swine Flu." We immediately began pushing this information out to all our electronic outlets including the Mount Rainier and Brentwood Yahoo discussion groups and the Chief's Blog. The Chief's Blog was also updated to include a link to CDC information that is revised daily at 11 am. All information has been disseminated in both English and Spanish. Printed copies of this information will be included in the May edition of *The Message*. In addition, our CERT coordinator provided a couple thousand printed copies of the information and City staff will be disseminating them to apartment managers, Rainier Manor residents and churches in order to ensure that we reach as many of our residents as possible.
- I will be participating in a daily conference call with PGPD commanders and Prince George's County Health Department officials to stay current with the County's overall response to this disease.
- All MRPD officers and staff have been provided with a personal protective kit for use when dealing with individuals suspected of having H1N1 flu. We have also provided kits to City Hall staff. All employees have been instructed to notify their supervisors if they or one of their family members have contracted the flu or may have been exposed to it. Should we receive credible information that a staff member has been exposed to this virus, he/she will not be allowed to report for duty. This policy is designed to ensure that infected or possibly infected staff members do not spread the infection to others in the work place, and to minimize the impact of the virus on service delivery.

- At this time we are not restricting access to the police facility by members of the general public. We will continue to monitor the progress of the virus and adjust our procedures accordingly.

Grant Applications:

- We have not as yet received word from the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) on the results of the grant application we submitted in March.
- Our federal Bureau of Justice Assistance grant application is due May 18th. Our C-Safe Coordinator Donald bell is putting the final touches on our application to ensure that it is filed on or before the due date. BJA has allocated \$50,000 to us, subject to their grant approval process.