

September 2011

Block Watcher

"Happily we bask in this warm September sun,
Which illuminates all creatures..."

- Henry David Thoreau



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School is back in Session!

Right after labor day schools will be back in session! This is a friendly reminder that school zones will be strictly enforced by our traffic officers! Please remember that when children are present you may not drive over 20mph in designated school zones! The minimum fine for going over 20mph is \$189 (1-5 mph over) and fines increase from there. If you do not stop for a public school bus the fine is \$394. Fines cannot be waived or reduced by a judge when the infraction was issued in a school zone.



If you travel near Whatcom Middle School or Cordata Elementary please note these two schools will be in session this fall!



Stolen Bikes

As you may have heard, there has been a rash of stolen bikes. So far this year the Bellingham Police Department has taken 196 reports for stolen bicycles (103 had been stolen at this time last year). The bikes being targeted range from low end to very high end. The thieves are also targeting locked and unlocked bikes. What can you do to protect yourself?

- 1) Invest in a good quality lock.
- 2) Write down the make, model and serial number of your bike.
- 3) Make your bike distinguishable from others. Stickers, small etch marks or paint can make your bike easily identified if you find one you think is yours should it be stolen.
- 4) If you can keep your bike indoors and away from view, do it!
- 5) Make sure to make a police report if your bike is stolen! Bellingham Police donates a lot of bikes each year because we are unable to match up recovered bikes to their owners since a report was never filed or filed with out providing us with make, model and serial number.

Did you know?

- You can look up crime statistics for your neighborhood by going to the Police Department's website at www.cob.org/police and clicking on the neighborhood crime statistic link on the right hand side?



Fake IDs

The college students will be coming back into town soon. Every year Bellingham Police has a significant increase in alcohol and party complaints when the college students return. If you know a college student you may want to remind them of the seriousness of fake IDs.

~ If you are between the ages of 18 and 21 and are caught with a fake ID in order to gain entry into a club or tavern or attempt to purchase alcohol you will pay a fine between \$250-\$1000, serve up to 90 days in jail, and complete a minimum of 25 hours of community service. This is a gross misdemeanor.

~ If you are convicted of providing an of-age ID to a person under 21 you will be required to pay a fine between \$250-\$1000, serve jail time up to 90 days, and complete a minimum of 25 hours of community service. This is a gross misdemeanor.

~ If you are convicted of preparing, acquiring or supplying an ID that is forged, altered or counterfeit to anyone under 21 you will pay a fine up to \$1000 and serve up to five years in prison. This is a felony conviction.

Bellingham Municipal Code– So What Really Is The Law Anyway?

9.28.050 - Property Owner's Responsibility

Every person owning, operating, or controlling any structure in the city shall be responsible for the extermination of rodents on or about the balance of the premises to the nearest adjoining property line.

Emergency Preparedness

September is National Preparedness month. What have you done to prepare for a disaster in our community? With the recent earthquakes in Colorado and Virginia and Hurricane Irene, this is the perfect time to prepare you and your family for similar events here. In 2009 a national survey revealed that only 57% of Americans had put disaster supplies aside for their family and only 44% have a family plan.

When preparing a disaster kit, design it to fit your family needs. One item that people tend to not think about when designing their kit are copies of important documents. After a disaster it will be helpful to have copies of insurance information and account numbers, bank account numbers, social security card, birth certificate, marriage certificate, list of emergency numbers, doctors information, prescription information, medical insurance information etc. The documents can be stored in a water-proof bag such as a Ziploc to protect them.



For more information on preparing a disaster kit please look at the Whatcom Unified Emergency Management website at

www.whatcomready.org

