

# Block Watcher

## A Newsletter for Block Watch Captains

March 2006 Issue



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Stay dry out there!



## Add I.C.E. To Your Cellular Phone

If you were unable to speak for yourself after a car accident or a medical emergency, your cell phone could— if you add an I.C.E. designation next to a name in your phone's directory.

Emergency workers and first responders can quickly scan through your cell phone directory and locate your I.C.E. contact. They can tell the person what has happened and ask potentially life saving questions such as medical conditions or drug allergies which you may have.

Emergency workers often have difficulty identifying next of kin based on the information most people carry in their wallets. Name only cell phone entries are not much help since they typically don't show the contact's relationship to the patient.

Emergency officials in our state are educating frontline workers about I.C.E., which caught on in England last summer after the London

terrorist attacks. Qwest, which serves 14 western states, already encourages its customers to enter I.C.E. on their cell phones.

Ideally, an I.C.E. entry in your cell phone's directory will compliment emergency contact information carried in your wallet next to your driver's license. It's best to have both in case your phone is destroyed in a crash, locked with a password, or lost.



## Are You An Aggressive Driver?

In a survey by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), about 30% of respondents said that in the past month, they felt their personal safety had been threatened by drivers displaying behaviors like weaving, tailgating, and making unsafe lane changes. That figure jumped to 67% when asked about behavior over the past year.

While aggressive driving is different from road rage (a criminal, rather than traffic offense), it

can easily escalate.

NHTSA's Web site offers a 38 question test to help drivers rate their own aggressiveness. Examples ask, Do you always:

- Overtake vehicles *only* on the left?
  - Use turn signals for *all* turns and lane changes?
  - Avoid using a cell phone while driving?
- (Con't. on page two)

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BPD officers being sworn in by Chief Randy Carroll on January 9th.

(Aggressive Driver *con't.*)

A “no” answer to any of those questions indicates that you are higher on the aggressive scale.

For a bit of an eye-opener, take the full test at [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov). (search “are you an aggressive driver or a smooth operator”)



**Aggressive drivers put themselves and others at risk!**

**Newly Hired BPD Officers To Leave For Academy**

Eight new police officers were sworn in before City Council members on January 9th, 2006. This is the largest number of officers to be sworn in in at least two decades.

The new recruits will soon be leaving for their 5 month stints at the Criminal Justice Training Academy . They will then return to Bellingham to begin work with our Field Training Officers in continued training this summer.

**In Case You Lose Your Wallet Or Purse:**

The following information is critical to limit the damage that can be done if your credit card, checks or personal identification are lost or stolen:

1. **Keep** credit card information (toll free numbers and your credit card number) in a safe location so that you can call them immediately to report the loss or theft of your credit cards.
2. **File** a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where the credit cards, etc were stolen. This proves to credit providers you were diligent and is the initial step in conducting any follow-up investigation.
3. **Call** the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number.

This alert means that any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen and they must contact you by phone to authorize new credit.

Keep the following numbers handy, along with the phone number for your credit card companies:

Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian: 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

