



HELPING YOURSELF.....HELPING YOUR COMMUNITY!!

People very often, and for various reasons, do not call the police about things that have happened to them or things they have seen. Unfortunately, keeping this information to yourself may adversely impact you later on, but it most certainly will have an adverse affect on the way of life in your community. Why does this happen?

Here are the most common reasons why people do not call the police:

1. **“I don’t want to get involved or go to court”.** As part of the same community you live in, we understand this and try to be sensitive to it. First and foremost, what we need from you is ***what*** you know. The information you posses helps direct where our police officers work and it can determine ***what*** we can accomplish for you! If you do not want to be directly involved, your information is still extremely valuable and useful to us. A very important thing to remember about getting involved is this: *without* your involvement we cannot guarantee culprits will be caught or held accountable. However, your information could prove very helpful in leading us to further evidence or information that could help us stop a problem you or others may be having! Good information, in most cases, will lead to an eventual successful conclusion.
2. **“My information won’t be very helpful”.** People often feel they need to have a great deal of information and a lot of details to be helpful to police. This is not correct. We realize many people may not be familiar with police procedures and the requirements of the Justice system, and as such may not really understand how helpful small pieces of information can be to Police. Here is the best way to look at it.....your information, no matter how minute, is a piece to a puzzle. Your neighbor, or people you may not be aware of, may also have a little ‘piece’ of the same puzzle. Each of you may not be aware of what each of you know. When you don’t provide your piece of a puzzle to police it could be preventing us from putting the whole picture together! Many crimes are solved by putting small pieces of information together which then shows us a much clearer picture than just one piece does. Also, your ‘little’ piece of information may lead us to other missing pieces of the puzzle! Reporting crime to police, no matter how trivial, is also critical in determining the level of police resources required in your community. Unreported crime is like it never happened!



3. **“Nothing happens in court anyway”**. Some people may have unrealistic expectations of our justice system, and yes, it is not always perfect. However, there are many instances where our justice system has been extremely effective. Further, we have other alternatives to court that have often been more effective than court! Victims of crime have had great success being included in the justice process and the ‘Alternative Measures’ process allows for families, victims, and communities to be more involved in administering justice. This not only provides you, the victim, a chance to help determine the punishment, it forces the culprit(s) to face you and actually see what their crime has done to you (and others). This process quite often has more chance of having a lasting impact on a person than the formal court punishments! When you are considering whether to pass on information please don’t speculate on what might, or might not, happen in the end....don’t let it deter you from doing the right thing.
4. **“The Police won’t do anything.”** The thing we want more than anything else is to be able to help you and your community. That is what we are here for. There may be occasions circumstances prevent us from responding immediately, however, we will do our utmost to help you with a problem you bring to our attention. If we are responding to several matters at one time we prioritize our calls and determine a response. If we do not show up immediately, that doesn’t mean we won’t follow up on your call or problem. If you call us with information or request assistance, you are encouraged to inquire with us later about our progress.

I would like to remind everyone that the police are an extension of you and your community. We do many things to help communities deal with a wide variety of problems. Many of these problems are a result of larger underlying factors in the community. Although we can help control the symptoms of these problems, the underlying factors need to be addressed by the community as a whole, not just the police! Therefore, people do share some responsibility in helping address the problems police contend with. This is the underlying concept of true “Community Policing”. The information and knowledge you have helps us help you! If we react as a ‘team’, we **will** make a difference in our community. Please, do not hesitate to share your information with us.

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