

BlockCaptain

QUARTERLY

A publication for St. Louis Park Block Captains.

St. Louis Park
MINNESOTA

Experience LIFE in the Park

Fall 2010:

National Night Out 2010 was a huge success thanks to all of the Block Captains that hosted gatherings for their neighbors and friends! We were able to collect hundreds of pounds in food donations for the local food shelf and it is all thanks to our great neighborhoods. I had to climb through the donations to stand behind my desk! Thanks again for all the volunteering that you do throughout the year.

As our warm weather leaves us and the cooler fall weather sets in, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of some fall crime prevention tips.

In this issue we included tips for you and your family, as well as your neighbors and friends, regarding Halloween safety, garage burglaries, and some general parking reminders. We also included information about vacant properties and how you can notify the city if there are issues in your area with a vacant/foreclosed property.

Please take note of the insert and share the information with those in your area that could benefit from the information. If you would like additional copies of the handout, please call me directly (952-924-2661) and I would be happy to print more for you.

Senior Scams:

Please take a look at this edition's insert regarding Senior Scams. Please share this information with your neighbors, friends, and family.



**National Night Out 2010
(Check out all the food donations
for STEP from the parties!
Great job everyone!)**



National Night Out 2010

City of St. Louis Park on Facebook:

We live in a busy, high speed world where information is shared faster than ever. Information is available on the city website as well as the social websites of Facebook and Twitter. Important information such as road closings, park and recreation activities, reminders, and many other topics are available. Become a friend of the city and join today!



DID YOU KNOW....

That the police department has a Chaplain Program? Chaplains are called to incidents by emergency personnel (police or fire) to assist with some of the following scenarios: death notifications, spiritual assistance to crime victims, injured persons, alcohol and drug abuse problems, etc. Learn more at www.stlouispark.org.

The Halloween tips are from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

For more child safety information, please consider the website missingkids.com for more information.

Halloween Safety Tips:



- 1.) Be sure that children are accompanied by a **TRUSTED ADULT** when “trick or treating.”
- 2) Accompany children to every door they approach and make sure you are familiar with the homes you are going to.
- 3) Teach children to **NEVER** enter a home without prior permission from their parents or guardians.
- 4) Teach children to **NEVER** approach a vehicle, occupied or not, unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- 5) Make sure children wear reflective clothing and carry a flashlight after dark.
- 6) Make sure children can see and breathe properly if they are wearing a mask.
- 7) Teach children if someone tries to grab them to make a scene. Talk about yelling loudly that this person is not my father/mother/guardian and make every effort by screaming, kicking, and resisting.

A word about Illegal Trash Dumping:

It is illegal to dump any kind of trash in public open areas, parks or private lots.

See Hennepin County's [A to Z Guide](#) for proper disposal at: www.hennepinatoz.org.





The St. Louis Park Police Department will conduct an eight-hour Crime Free Multi-Housing Training course for local apartment owners, managers and caretakers on September 16, 2010. Multiple officers, crime prevention specialists, and community professionals will share their expertise in crime prevention and housing specific issues. Some of the topics included in the training are drug awareness, background screening, lease agreements, eviction process, and premise security information.

More information about the city's rental ordinance that was adopted in 2007 and was recently revised in 2010 can be found at: www.stlouispark.org.



Parking Cautions:

Seasonal weather changes are approaching. Please respect Fire Lanes in front of buildings, businesses, and apartment buildings.

Watch for signs and yellow lines indicating a fire lane. Emergency responders and fire personnel require all the space provided for access during an emergency or fire.

Garage Burglaries: A Special Request

The Police Department requests residents to close their garage doors before retiring for the evening. Make sure all service doors are locked tight and any exterior doors to your home. If you park your vehicle outside overnight, make sure the vehicle is locked up and personal belongings are removed.

If you are a neighbor and observe a garage door or service door open, kindly remind your neighbor to close their door and secure their valuables!

Vacant and Foreclosed Property

Information:

The foreclosure crisis continues to plague all municipalities. The City is committed to ensuring that none of these properties become "eye sores" or nuisances in the neighborhoods. The Inspections Department continues to monitor the condition of foreclosed and vacant properties in St. Louis Park. However, they need your help with monitoring these properties. Should you notice that a property in your neighborhood has become vacant or has taken a turn for the worse with broken windows, trash in the yard, long grass, etc. please contact the Inspections Complaint Line at 952-924-2126 and leave a message with contact information and the problem address.

St. Louis Park Police Department
3015 Raleigh Ave. S.
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
www.stlouispark.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Fall Neighborhood Surveys will be conducted this month regarding the following neighborhoods: Texa Tonka, Oak Hill, Aquila, South Oak Hill, Cobblecrest, Minnehaha, and Amhurst.

Please watch the mail if you live in one of these neighborhoods for your invitation to complete your neighborhood's survey!

Don't Be Scammed!



Scams and schemes are a criminal's "bread and butter." If you have a computer, a telephone, or a mailbox, you could become a victim.



NATIONAL CRIME
PREVENTION COUNCIL

National Crime Prevention Council

1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW • 13th Floor • Washington, DC 20036 • www.ncpc.org

Scams and schemes are a criminal's "bread and butter." If you have a computer, a telephone, or a mailbox, you could become a victim. Your best defense is to know a scam when you see (or hear) one. Following are a few common scams that criminals pitch to innocent people every day:

- **Credit-related Schemes:** You are promised a credit card regardless of your credit history, for an advance fee. Or you are promised credit card protection or credit repair services, also for a fee. You pay, but the card or service is never delivered.
- **Magazine Sales Scams:** You are offered a magazine subscription at a very low price by someone who claims to work for the magazine company. The price is misrepresented and is actually much higher, or the magazine is never delivered.
- **Investment Fraud:** You are invited to participate in an investment opportunity and promised spectacular profits with no risk. Instead of making money, you lose it.
- **Overpayment Scams:** You advertise something you want to sell, and a potential buyer offers to purchase it. The buyer sends a check for more than the asking price and asks you to wire back the difference. You do, but later the buyer's check bounces.
- **Work-at-home Scams:** Advertisements promise big earnings for people who want to work at home. You send a check for training or materials and receive a kit with cheap craft materials and discover there are no clients to pay for your work.
- **Vacation/Travel Fraud:** You accept an offer for a free or very cheap travel package but end up paying hidden costs, such as reservation fees or taxes, or listening to a high-pressure sales pitch for a timeshare or club membership.
- **Phishing:** You get an email or pop-up message that says your account must be updated immediately or it will be closed. You click on a link to a website that looks like it belongs to your bank or other institution and "update" your account by entering personal identifying information. Soon you discover you are a victim of identity theft.
- **Pharming:** Also called domain spoofing, this technique is used by criminals to redirect Web traffic from a legitimate server to their own server, where they can steal any personal information that the user types in. Pharmers "poison" the Domain Name Service in order to "fool" a user's browser into linking to a bogus website.
- **Nigerian Money Scam:** You are contacted by someone from Nigeria and offered millions of dollars if you will transfer money from a foreign bank to your bank account for safekeeping. When you agree, you are asked to pay huge transfer fees or legal expenses but receive no money.
- **Prize and Sweepstakes Scam:** You are told that you have won a fabulous prize but must buy something or pay taxes up front in order to claim it. The prize is a cheap trinket, worth far less than the money you paid to claim it.
- **Foreign Lotteries Scam:** You are offered tickets to enter a foreign lottery and send money, but either the lottery doesn't exist or the tickets never arrive. It is illegal to promote a foreign lottery by telephone or mail in the United States.
- **Pyramids and Multilevel Marketing:** For a fee, you are promised big profits in exchange for recruiting new members. Plans that promise profits for recruitment of members rather than for selling goods and services are illegal and usually collapse.
- **Scholarship Scams:** A company guarantees scholarship money for an upfront fee, but it only helps locate scholarships rather than awarding them.
- **Charity Scams:** A natural disaster is dominating the news and you get a letter/email/phone call asking you to donate funds to help its victims. You send money, but the victims never receive your donation or receive only a tiny portion—the rest goes to cover administrative costs like salaries.
- **Bogus Merchandise Sales:** You purchase something advertised for sale on the Internet or through a telemarketing call. You pay for the merchandise but never receive it or receive an inferior or counterfeit product in its place.
- **Telephone Cramming:** Unauthorized charges for goods or services appear on your phone bill, but you miss seeing them because your phone bill is complicated with authorized charges such as voice mail and Internet service.
- **Telephone Slamming:** Your telephone service is switched from your current company to another one without your knowledge or permission, resulting in higher charges for long distance and other services.