

Community Partnership Connection



TIME TO START TALKING TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS ABOUT HOLIDAY SAFETY



The holiday season is fast approaching so now is a good time to talk with family, friends and neighbors about keeping each other safe during this busy and exciting time.

We want to help you start the holiday safety conversation by offering tips you should consider while shopping, traveling, or at home.

If you have not already done so, this is also a good time to get to know your neighbors. This includes the people who live next door, across the street and over the back fence.

Neighbors watching out for neighbors help keep an eye out for suspicious activity and make communities safer.

You can also increase your home security by signing up for the free online neighborhood safety service, AlertID, or by starting a Neighborhood Watch program. For more information on both, visit the Washoe County Sheriff's website: www.Washoesheriff.com.

Beginning on Monday, November 21, follow the Sheriff's Office on Twitter, @washoesheriff, to receive the "**12 Tweets of Holiday Safety.**" The Sheriff's Office plans to provide a series of daily tweets with holiday safety tips to help kick off the traditional holiday shopping season.

On the following page are a few suggestions on keeping yourself and family, your gifts and your money safe this holiday season.



Keep Your Holidays Safe and Merry While Shopping, Traveling & at Home



SHOPPING:

- Lock your vehicle and hide valuables, preferably in the trunk or locked compartment.
- Before sunrise and after sunset, park and walk in well lit areas and carry keys in your hand.
- Stay alert to your surroundings and take a moment to glance around for possible suspicious persons, vehicles, and/or situations.
- When in crowded places, be alert for potential thieves. Don't overload yourself with packages. Maintain visibility and mobility to avoid potential threats.
- Be wary of strangers approaching you for any reason. The holiday season is notorious for "con-artists" who may attempt to distract you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.
- When possible, avoid carrying large amounts of cash and valuables, and avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Never leave personal belongings unattended.
- Avoid shopping alone; there is added safety when shopping with a companion.
- Keep a record of all your credit card numbers in a secure place at home.
- When shopping with children, keep a close eye on them at all times. Consider coaching them to go to a store clerk or security guard if they become separated and be sure they know their first and last name so they can advise someone who they are.
- Give children a contact phone number that they can carry on their person in case they do become lost.

TRAVEL:

- Inform someone who's trustworthy where you will be and when you might be expected back to your residence.
- Ask a neighbor or other dependable person to watch your house and retrieve your newspapers and mail if possible.
- Prior to getting into your vehicle take a look inside and around before entering. If you observe evidence of a possible burglary, call your local law enforcement agency. For the Sheriff's Office, call 832-WCSO (9276).
- Anticipate inclement weather and plan accordingly - carry chains, keep sufficient gas in the tank, and use extreme caution while driving.

HOME SAFETY:

- Be extra cautious about locking windows, sliders, and doors when leaving for any length of time. We suggest keeping all entrance points into your house secured while you're at home as well.
- Set indoor and outdoor lights on timers and think about doing the same with a television or radio to make it appear as if someone is home.
- Never keep gifts or valuable objects in plain view from any window. Close blinds, shutters, drapes, and curtains because if a burglar can see those items they may attempt to take them from you.
- If a person knocks at your door and you don't recognize them, don't feel obligated to open your door. Teach your children that by no means will they open the door to anyone prior to your knowledge and authorization.

Free CERT Classes Available to Public

Next Session Begins December 2nd

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills.

Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT graduates can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

CERT graduates are also encouraged to take a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. The CERT course is taught by a trained team of subject matter experts who have completed a state approved or national CERT Train-the-Trainer course. CERT training includes disaster preparedness, fire safety and suppression, emergency medical operations, light search and rescue operations, disaster psychology, terrorism awareness, incident command and documentation, and requires only 24 hours of training.

Participation in this course is free and open to the public. Participants are NOT required to volunteer. To learn more, call the Citizen Corps office at 325-6928; email the program coordinator Linda Sienko at lsienko@washoecounty.us or visit www.wcsovolunteer.org.



Successful Inmate Substance Abuse Treatment Program saved hundreds of thousands in tax dollars

The Alternatives to Incarceration Unit diverts qualified offenders away from costly incarceration and offers a second chance to those who have committed less serious offenses.

The Alternatives to Incarceration Unit offers inmate counseling programs such as the Substance Abuse Treatment Program. Over three-fourths of the inmates who participated in the Treatment Program in fiscal year 2009/2010 didn't re-offend within a year after their release.

This success led to an estimated savings of nearly \$300,000 in taxpayer dollars during fiscal year 2010/2011 based on jail days saved. Participation in the program is paid for by the inmate through the Inmate Commissary Fund, not by the County or the taxpayers.

According to statistics recently released by the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Alternatives to Incarceration Unit, the Inmate Substance Abuse Treatment Program saw a:

- ★ 49% increase in participation over previous years
- ★ 463 successful completions
- ★ **76% from fiscal year 2009/2010 did not recidivate** (inmates did not return to the detention facility within one year of release)
- ★ Estimated 2,315 jail days saved in fiscal year 2010 - 2011
- ★ **Total savings for fiscal year 2010/2011 of \$294,005**

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washoesheriff.com



*Dedicated Service in
Partnership with our
Community*

**AlertID Looking for Volunteers to
Serve as Public Safety Ambassadors**

AlertID is looking for volunteers with a public safety background and good communication skills to help AlertID users understand basic public safety concepts, learn how to get the information they need to make good decisions regarding their personal safety, and effectively use the tools provided by AlertID to share critical information with law enforcement and their neighbors. Hours are flexible and training is provided. If you are interested please e-mail Kaydie@alertid.com or call at 775-852-2098.

And the Award Goes to...

The Sheriff's Office Patrol Division swept this year's statewide Department of Public Safety-Office of Traffic Safety Joining Forces Awards.

Joining Forces is a multi-jurisdictional law enforcement program that promotes statewide enforcement in four areas: DUI, seat belts, speed and pedestrian safety.

Sergeants Phil Condon and Mike Gross were two of the top five coordinators of the year; both winning the Award of Excellence for Outstanding Leadership and Coordination.

Deputies Rick Pillon and Jason Wood both won Outstanding Officer awards of excellence for Outstanding Performance.

The Best Media Partnership award was given to the Sheriff's Office for excellence in involving the media in Joining Forces events and helping to promote the Joining Forces program.



Deputy Jason Wood (left), Gina Espinosa-Salcedo with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (center), and Deputy Rick Pillon (right)

Follow the Sheriff's Office on Twitter at:

<http://twitter.com/washoesheriff>

