

Community Partnership Connection



Sheriff's Office Supports Sexual Assault Awareness Month

According to the most recent National Violence Against Women Survey, 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men in the United States have experienced an attempted or completed rape at some time in their lives. Throughout the month of April, The Sheriff's Office is supporting a Nevada Coalition Against Sexual Violence campaign that promotes Sexual Assault Awareness in northern Nevada.

"Sexual assault is one of the most important issues facing communities in the country," says Sheriff Mike Haley. "We want the public to be better informed by having an open discussion about prevention." Sexual assaults can happen to anyone: children, students, wives, mothers, grandmothers, the rich and poor, boys and men. Assailants can be classmates, co-workers, or a total stranger or as frightening as it may sound, a friend or a family member.

The most predominant form of sexual assault in Washoe County is alcohol or drug related. "In many alcohol related sexual assaults, the perpetrator takes advantage of the victims intoxication," said Detective Division Captain David Nikoley, "when the victim is drinking, it makes it very difficult for them to guard against an attack. It is never the victim's fault, even when they don't make the safest choices."

Andrea Sundberg, executive director of the Nevada Coalition Against Sexual Violence encourages bystander intervention. "The simple act of stepping in to help a person who needs assistance,"

can help avoid a sexual assault" Sundberg said, "If you see a friend heading into a dangerous situation at a party, encourage them to leave or stay by their side."



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Sheriff issues Commendation for Prevention of Suicide

On April 14th, Sheriff Haley presented a Commendation to Deputies Kerry Saulnier and Clint Swaim for preventing a suicide attempt on October 14, 2010.

Deputies Kerry Saulnier and Clint Swaim, were hailed by a local citizen concerned about a young woman who was sitting on the ledge of a river railing. Saulnier and Swaim immediately located the young woman, who was attempting to jump into the river, distraught over a failed relationship with her boyfriend. After repeated attempts to get her off the railing, they succeeded in getting her to move away from the ledge to safety.

Sheriff Haley presented the Deputies with a commendation for taking extraordinary measures to protect the young woman, who was seconds away from committing suicide or causing herself great bodily injury.



“As a Community, armed with more information, we are more powerful than the criminals” ~ Sheriff Mike Haley

Graffiti: What Does it Say (Part 1 of a 2 Part Series)



Graffiti is an expensive burden to our residents and contributes to community decay. Graffiti lowers property values, is costly and destructive, and often leads to further criminal activity. The Sheriff's Office, partnered with the Reno and Sparks Police Departments are working to eradicate graffiti to protect our quality of life and ensure a more livable Truckee Meadows. This is the first of a two part series on how you can help public safety agencies in this effort. This month we focus on what Graffiti is and what it represents. Graffiti is writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or spray painted illicitly on a wall or other surfaces in public view to get attention or recognition. When Graffiti is placed on public or private property without owner permission, it is not art, its vandalism and it's illegal.

Graffiti comes in six basic types:

1. **Tagger:** Simple line letters normally painted quickly in two or three colors called “throw-ups” or more elaborate colorful designs called “pieces.” A “piece” is a more elaborate representation of the vandal's name, incorporating more stylized letters, usually incorporating a much larger range of colors. Taggers may have “crews” whose members use one or more crew names plus their own “Moniker” or name they call themselves.
2. **Gang:** Ways that gang members communicate with each other, often using simple lettering, usually less “imaginative.” Graffiti can be used as a gang signal to mark territory or serve as an indicator for gang-related activity.
3. **Juvenile:** Incorporating pictures of body parts and/or offensive remarks aimed at an individual.
4. **Offensive:** racist or messages that reflect prejudice
5. **Advertising:** trying to get a message across, usually a few words and no more. Not common in Washoe County
6. **Decorative or Art:** The only **legal** display, decorative graffiti is used as an art form for public or private property with the permission of the municipality or owner. Examples in Reno include the water tower near North McCarren and the Wall at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport.

Next month we will feature information about what residents can do to make a difference!

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

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The Sheriff's Office offers the following recommendations on ways to reduce risk of a sexual assault:

1. Avoid Dangerous Situations

- Don't let alcohol or other drugs cloud your judgment. Most law enforcement calls on sexual assaults occur at parties involving drugs and alcohol.
- Trust your instincts. If a situation or place makes you feel uncomfortable or uneasy, leave.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Knowing where you are and who is around you may help you to find a way to get out of a bad situation.
- Try to avoid isolated areas or being alone. It is more difficult to get help if no one is around.
- Walk with purpose. Even if you don't know where you are going, act like you do.

2. Safety Planning

- Make sure your cell phone is with you and charged and that you have money.
- Don't leave your drink unattended. If you leave your drink alone, get a new one. Don't accept drinks from people you don't know or trust.
- Have a code word with friends or family so that if you don't feel comfortable, you can call them and communicate your discomfort without the person you are with knowing. Your friends or family can then come to get you or make up an excuse for you to leave.
- Be conscious of exits or other escape routes
- Think about options for transportation (cab, car, bus, train, etc.)
- Avoid putting music headphones in both ears so that you can be more aware of your surroundings, especially if you are walking alone.

3. Your Home

- Make sure all doors (don't forget sliding glass doors) and windows have sturdy, well-installed locks, and use them. Install a wide-angle peephole in the door. Keep entrances well-lit.
- Never open your door to strangers. Offer to make an emergency call while someone waits outside. Check the identification of sales or service people before letting them in. Don't be embarrassed to phone for verification.
- Be wary of isolated spots such as apartment laundry rooms, underground garages, parking lots, offices after business hours. Walk with a friend, co-worker, or security guard, particularly at night.
- Know your neighbors, so you have someone to call or go to if you're uncomfortable or frightened.
- If you come home and see a door or window open, or broken, don't go in. Call the police from a cell phone, public phone or a neighbor's phone.

4. Outdoors

- Avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night. Stay in well-traveled, well-lit areas.
- Wear clothes and shoes that give you freedom of movement.
- Be careful if anyone in a car asks you for directions; if you answer, keep your distance from the car.
- Have your key ready before you reach the door-home, car, or office.
- If you think you're being followed, change direction and head for open stores, restaurants, theaters, or a house with its lights on.

5. Your Car

- Look around and under your car and in the back seat before you get in.
- If your car breaks down, lift the hood, lock the doors, and turn on your flashers. Call police on a cell phone, or use a Call Police banner or flares.
- If someone stops, roll the window down slightly and ask the person to call the police or a tow service.
- Don't hitchhike, ever. And don't ever pick up a hitchhiker.

SO Testing New E-Ticketing Program to Increase Efficiency and Safety

At a time when local governments are searching to save millions of dollars in efficiencies, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office is testing a new mobile technology system that is expected to improve the efficiency and accuracy of accident investigations and citations, while increasing officer safety and saving taxpayer's money.

"The goal is not to write more tickets," said Sergeant Mike Gross with the Sheriff's Patrol Division. "The goal is to make more efficient use of our reduced levels of staff."

The new hand-held electronic system from Brazos Technology will dramatically decrease the amount of time it takes for patrol personnel to write citations, handle misdemeanor complaints and investigate accident scenes. The system also provides increased connectivity to motorcycle units where on-board computers are not possible.

The system uses hand-held devices that scan barcodes on driver's licenses and registration forms to accurately and quickly complete electronic forms.

"Less time on the side of the road also increases officer safety as well as public safety because we are more available to respond to other calls for service," Sergeant Gross said.

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office is one of 17 Nevada Law Enforcement Agencies that are looking to incorporate Brazos Technology.

6. If the Unthinkable Happens - Your Goal is to Survive

- Scream and make a scene. Be rude, Make noise to discourage your attacker from following.
- Alert those around you if you are threatened.
- If you become a victim of a crime call the police. The sooner you tell, the greater the chances the rapist will be caught. But if you are uncomfortable about calling the police, contact a rape crisis center.

Protect Yourself from Identity Theft: Defend (Part 3 of a 3 Part Series)

Washoe County Sheriff's Office-Community Relations

911 E. Parr Boulevard
Reno Nevada 89512
775.785.6228
775.785.6244

E-mail:
sheriffcommunityrelations@washoecounty.us

Find us on the Web:
www.washoesherriff.com



*Dedicated Service in
Partnership with our
Community*

If you are a victim of identity theft, take the following four steps as soon as possible, and **keep a record** with the details of your conversations and copies of all correspondence.

1. **Place a fraud alert on your credit reports, and review your credit reports.** This will help prevent an identity thief from opening any more accounts in your name. You only need to contact one of the three companies below to place an alert. The company you call is required to contact the other two.:
 - a. **TransUnion:** 1-800-680-7289; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6790
 - b. **Equifax:** 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
 - c. **Experian:** 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); www.experian.com; P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013
2. **Close the accounts that you know, or believe, have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.** Call and speak with someone in the security or fraud department of each company. Follow up in writing, and include copies (NOT originals) of supporting documents.
3. **File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.** By sharing your identity theft complaint with the FTC, you will provide important information that can help law enforcement officials across the nation track down identity thieves and stop them. You can file a complaint with the FTC using the [online complaint form](#); or call the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline, toll-free: 1-877-ID-THEFT (438-4338). Be sure to call the Hotline to update your complaint if you have any additional information or problems.
4. **File a report with your local law enforcement or law enforcement in the community where the identity theft took place.** Call your local law enforcement and tell them that you want to file a report about your identity theft. Tell them that you need a copy of the Identity Theft Report (the police report with your ID Theft Complaint attached or incorporated) to dispute the fraudulent accounts and debts created by the identity thief.



The Sheriff's Office is now on **Twitter!**
To get the latest news, follow us at:
<http://twitter.com/washoesherriff>

AlertID Now Offers Sex Offender Data

Effective in April, AlertID will provide Sex Offender Data to on-line members. This data will be placed on all area maps. If an offender moves to your area, you will be alerted and offered tips on how you can protect your children.

