

# Waunakee Police Department Newsletter

## February 2019



The Waunakee Police Department is pleased to announce the addition of Officer Nathan DeGroff! Officer DeGroff began the field training program with the Waunakee Police Department in early January and is scheduled for solo patrol in early spring. If you see Officer DeGroff around town welcome him to Waunakee!



*I grew up in Lodi WI and went to Lodi High School where I enjoyed playing sports such as football, wrestling, and track. After high school, I attended the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point where I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Resource Management Law Enforcement and a minor in Criminal Justice. While at Stevens Point, I attended Mid-State Technical College and completed the 720 hour Law Enforcement Training Academy. After the academy, I spent 2 summers working for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as a Conservation Warden in Dane County. In my free time, I enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, and spending time outdoors with my family.*



### Stay Back!

WI state statute 346.915(2) "Following a snowplow too close on highway." Drivers must follow snowplows (who are actively plowing) 200 feet back if the speed limit is over 35, and 75 feet back if the speed limit is under 35 unless you are passing or overtaking. At intersections, the distance is 20 feet back. The fine for violating this Statute in the village of Waunakee is \$98.80 and 3 demerit points.



### Snow removal

It is the responsibility of the property owner to clear sidewalks of snow and ice within 24 hours of the end of the snow or ice event. No person shall push, shove or in any way deposit any snow or ice onto any public streets or alley, public or private sidewalk.



Many communities around Dane County are experiencing an uptick in criminal behaviors such as auto thefts, burglaries and theft. Waunakee is not immune to these types of crime and officers have taken several reports recently. Our officers vigorously patrol our community to deter, prevent and address these behaviors, but unfortunately police cannot be everywhere. Here are some simple things you can do to help!

### **-LOCK IT UP-**

We often hear people talking about the recent “Break-ins” and we would like to clarify something. The term “Break-in” implies that the suspects are forcing entry to commit these criminal acts. Although forced entry burglaries, theft or auto thefts can happen the crimes that have been occurring recently are by far simply targets of opportunity, not forced entry. What we mean is these criminals are not necessarily breaking-in; they are simply looking for unlocked doors. Follow these precautions and make them your routine, they can significantly reduce your chances of becoming a victim:

- Always lock your car doors when you cannot monitor them
- Never leave your car keys in the vehicle when you are not
- Do not leave your car running unattended (Even to warm up or “run-in quick”)
- Do not leave valuables in your car – if you must, hide them so they are out of sight
- Close your garage doors when you cannot monitor your garage –even during the day!
- Keep doors to your home locked and double check before you go to bed
- Talk with your kids about these tips so they follow the routine also** \*There have been multiple cases where we learned a young family member had left their car unlocked or garage door open without the parents knowledge

### **-Criminal Tactics-**

We feel it’s important to understand some of the tactics being used so you can better prevent becoming a victim. Tactics can always change so please remain vigilant, but here are some basic examples of cases we have investigated:

-Suspects will drive around neighborhoods looking for open garage doors (At all hours of the day/night). Once an open garage is observed; 1 or more subjects jump out of their vehicle and enter the open garage. Once inside they may rummage through the vehicles looking for valuables or, if the keys are in the vehicle, they may take the vehicle. They have also taken key fobs or garage door openers meaning they may plan to return later. On occasion they open the door leading into the home from the garage. They may take the car keys hanging on the hook by the door and steal a car or they may take valuables found inside.

-Suspects will drive around in a vehicle looking for running unattended vehicles. They have stolen vehicles warming up in garages or driveways, running parked outside of daycares, running parked at gas stations or stores, etc. Once a running unattended vehicle is observed; 1 or more subjects jump out and into the running vehicle and take off stealing the car. It only takes seconds to steal a running unattended vehicle!

-Groups of suspects enter a neighborhood and begin pulling on car doors (At all hours of the day/night). If an open car door is located they may take valuables inside the vehicle or look for a garage door opener. They have used the garage door opener to open the garage to gain access; from there they may take valuables or car keys (to steal the car) inside the garage or on occasion from inside the home.

-Suspects have been confronted by homeowners and have run away immediately, but this does not mean they are not dangerous. If you find someone in your car, garage or home – call 911 immediately even if they run off.

### **-See Something Say Something-**

If you see suspicious activity it’s important to call 911 right away. We have had people tell us they did not want to bother us so they didn’t call or they report something they saw overnight the next day. Suspicious activity could be serious and should be addressed by an officer right away, this is not a bother-this is our job. Early intervention by law enforcement not only stops a possible crime in progress but also can be instrumental to ensure a conviction for the crime committed.



## Law and Ordinance...of the month

Any police officer will tell you that when someone finds out you're a cop off-duty they inevitably have a question about a law or ordinance... "Is it legal to?" So, in an effort to educate the public on certain laws or ordinances we will feature one here each month. If you have a question about a law or Waunakee Village Ordinance you would like to see featured in this newsletter, send us a message to: [newsletter@waunakeepd.org](mailto:newsletter@waunakeepd.org).

Above we discussed ways to keep your vehicle safe from theft. One of those ways is to not leave your vehicle running unattended or leave your keys in the vehicle. In the Village of Waunakee we actually have an ordinance prohibiting this, so we thought it would be good to feature this ordinance. Although rarely enforced, it's important to know leaving your keys in your vehicle or leaving your vehicle running unattended could get you a \$25 citation in Waunakee.

### **70-119. - Leaving keys in vehicle; parking vehicles with motor running.**

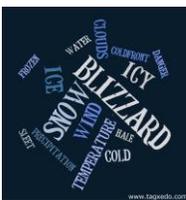
(a)

**Leaving keys in vehicle.** *No person shall permit any motor vehicle to stand or remain unattended on any street, alley or other public area, except an attended parking area, unless either the starting lever, throttle, steering apparatus, gear shift or ignition of the vehicle is locked and the key for such lock is removed from the vehicle. Whenever any police officer shall find any vehicle standing with the key in the ignition in violation of this subsection, such officer is authorized to remove such key from the vehicle and deliver the key to the police department for safe custody. This subsection does not apply to motor vehicles operated by common carriers of passengers under Wis. Stats. ch. 194.*

(b)

**Parking vehicles with motor or refrigerator unit running.** *No person shall park or leave standing any motor vehicle with the motor or refrigerator unit running for more than 30 minutes within 300 feet of any residence within the village between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.*

(Code 1988, § 10-1-24; Code 1998, § 94-80)



## Winter Driving Tips

- Clear snow and ice from all windows **and lights**
- Pay attention
- Leave plenty of room for stopping
- Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows
- Know the current road conditions
- Use brakes carefully
- Watch for slippery bridge decks
- Don't use your cruise control in wintry conditions
- Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle
- Do not pump anti-lock brakes
- Look farther ahead in traffic than you normally do
- Remember that trucks are heavier than cars
- Go slow!



## Alternate Side Parking

Odd-Even side parking is currently in effect and will end April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018. Alternate side parking is regulated between 2:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m. on Waunakee Streets. Park your vehicles so it will be on the even numbered side of the street on even numbered mornings and on the odd side of the street on odd numbered mornings unless posted otherwise.



## Waunakee Police Department TIP Line

The Waunakee Police Department maintains an anonymous tips line, 849-2TIP (2847). Callers can leave a message about criminal activity including drug information. The caller may report the information they have and can remain completely anonymous. Tipsters may be eligible for a cash reward if the information results in arrest.

Callers should provide the date and time of their call, as this will become your identifying number. For example, if you call on January 1, 2019, at 10:30 your ID number would be 010120191030. If callers do want to obtain a reward they must follow up with the Tip Line coordinator, Lt. Joe Peterson at 850-4510. You will only be asked to provide your identifying number. From there, arrangements will be made to pick up the reward at a specific location.

**If you are calling about a crime in progress, call 911. If it is NOT an emergency but you would either like to speak with an officer or have an officer respond, please call the non-emergency number at 849-4523. \*Officers are on-duty in Waunakee 24/7 365 days a year but may not be at the police department. If you do not get an answer when calling; stay on the line and you will be connected with a dispatcher who can get you an officer.**

## Newsletter ideas or topics

If you have a topic or idea you would like us to consider for future Waunakee Police Newsletter, please email the idea for consideration to the address below.

Questions can be sent to [newsletter@waunakeepd.org](mailto:newsletter@waunakeepd.org). Questions submitted may be featured in future newsletters. The person submitting the question will not be identified.



Please  our Waunakee Police Department Facebook page. We provide information regarding local events, safety tips and press releases for major incidents. You can also send us your questions through private messages and tips on any recent crimes that have taken place.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Waunakee-Police-Department/349673238430794>