

Waunakee Police Department Newsletter

March 2019



The Waunakee Police Department is pleased to announce the addition of Officer Mitch Flora! Officer Flora began the field training program with the Waunakee Police Department in February and is scheduled for solo patrol later this spring. If you see Officer Flora around town welcome him to Waunakee!



I grew up in Verona WI and went to Verona Area High School where I enjoyed playing sports such as football, baseball, and basketball. After High school I attended Madison College. I received an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice. While I was in the Criminal Justice program I spent the summer of 2017 doing an internship with the City of Monona Police Department. Upon graduating the Criminal Justice program I attended and completed the 720 hour Law Enforcement Training Academy at Madison College which I graduated from in December of 2018. On my free time I enjoy hunting, golfing and spending time with friends and family.



Alternate Side Parking

Just a reminder: Alternate Side Parking is still being enforced until April 1st 2019.



Tax Scams

Aggressive and threatening phone calls by criminals impersonating IRS agents remain a major threat to taxpayers, but now the IRS is receiving new reports of scammers calling under the guise of verifying tax return information over the phone.

The latest variation being seen in the last few weeks tries to play off the current tax season. Scam artists call saying they have your tax return, and they just need to verify a few details to process your return. The scam tries to get you to give up personal information such as a Social Security number or personal financial information, such as bank numbers or credit cards.

“These schemes continue to adapt and evolve in an attempt to catch people off guard just as they are preparing their tax returns,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. “Don’t be fooled. The IRS won’t be calling you out of the blue asking you to verify your personal tax information or aggressively threatening you to make an immediate payment.”

This January, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) announced they have received reports of roughly 896,000 phone scam contacts since October 2013 and have become aware of over 5,000 victims who have collectively paid over \$26.5 million as a result of the scam. Just this year, the IRS has seen a 400 percent increase in phishing schemes.

The IRS will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment over the phone, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed you several bills.
- Call or email you to verify your identity by asking for personal and financial information.
- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card or iTunes card.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone or e-mail.
- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

If you don’t owe taxes, or have no reason to think that you do:

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their “IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting” web page. You can also call 800-366-4484.
- Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the “FTC Complaint Assistant” on FTC.gov. Please add “IRS Telephone Scam” in the notes.

For more information on the various tax scams visit the IRS, Consumer Alert webpage at:
<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-scams-consumer-alerts>



2018 Wisconsin Crash Fatalities

The preliminary totals for Wisconsin traffic related fatalities in 2018 are reported to be 576. This is down 18 fatalities from 2017. Dane County had 41 traffic related fatalities in 2018, which is up from 32 last year. Milwaukee County had the most traffic related fatalities, 67.

Please remember to buckle up, pay attention, slow down and drive sober! For a complete list of traffic related fatalities follow the link to the WI DOT webpage below.

<http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/about-wisdot/newsroom/statistics/countyfatality.aspx>



Many families will be traveling for the upcoming “Spring Break”. Below are a few tips to avoid ID theft.

1. **Reduce what you carry:** Clean out your wallet or purse and remove all unnecessary cards or other items. Do not carry anything with your social security number.
2. **Pay attention in tourist areas:** These are areas where scammers may have card skimming devices or the standard pick pocket/ purse snatcher.
3. **Avoid using public computers:** They could have information stealing software installed. If you must use one, avoid entering personal information or logging into online bank accounts.
4. **Don’t bring your checkbook:** If you have your checks stolen a scammer has your name, address, account number, routing number. Plenty of information to withdraw money and open you up to a host of other scams.
5. **Verify Callers To Your Hotel Room:** A common scam is to call the room and convince the guest that there is a problem with the credit card. Do not give your card number over the phone. Instead go to the front desk to confirm there is a problem.

6. **Watch Out if using public WiFi:** Make sure if you do use a public WiFi network that it is an authenticated network. Some scammers will set up public hotspots that are not secure and others can gain access to a traveler's personal information.



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.

This month we want to cover snow removal, specifically where you may deposit snow and ice. This winter has certainly been a difficult one with heavy snow and frustrating ice accumulations, but don't worry folks summer has to come sometime! Everyone can agree that after a heavy snowfall we want the streets clear so safe travel can resume. Waunakee Public Works puts in long tireless hours to accomplish this for us. Occasionally we get complaints that snow has been deposited onto a public street by a resident either before or after the plow has gone by. When this happens an officer is sent to make the resident aware this is prohibited by local ordinance and they must remove the snow from the roadway or alley. It does not matter if the plow has come by or not, snow cannot be deposited in any way onto a public street or alley. This also becomes an issue as temperatures begin to rise and residents attempt to speed up the process by breaking down the mountain at the end of their driveway and throw it in the street to melt. This is also prohibited and creates a road hazard, even if it's temporary.

Below is the ordinance:

Sec. 58-320. - Duty to remove from sidewalks; encroachment

(b)

Encroachment into street or onto sidewalks. No person shall push, shove or in any way deposit any snow or ice onto any public streets or alley, public or private sidewalk or public lands dedicated to public use except for parcels or lots located where existing buildings are constructed within five feet of the street right-of-way and the sidewalks exist from the village right-of-way to the curblin. In such instances, the owner, occupant or employee of the owner or occupant of the parcel or lot shall be permitted to deposit snow and ice from the sidewalk onto the public street.



Dangerous Ice Conditions

The Village of Waunakee has several small bodies of water located in neighborhoods, parks and industrial areas throughout the Village. These bodies of water are mostly used as retention ponds to manage storm water run-off. It is not uncommon to see adults and children walking out on the ice during the winter season. Caution, this time of year is a dangerous time for ice travel due to the warming temperatures and the amount of melt water these ponds receive. Parents please have a conversation with your children about the dangers of ice travel and keep them off the ice this time of year.



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>

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. Questions submitted may be featured in future newsletters. The person submitting the question will not be identified.