

# Waunakee Police Department Newsletter

## April 2020



### COVID-19

The Waunakee Police Department would like to thank our residents that are abiding by the Safer At Home order issued by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers. These are unprecedented times. We want to assure you that the Waunakee Police Department is taking precautions to protect our officers while still maintaining police services to village residents. We have adjusted our operations slightly to adhere with the social distancing recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Officers are attempting to resolve issues over the phone if possible to do so. Obviously, due to the nature of police work a physical response by police may still be required in certain circumstances. Our officers are familiar with the recommendations by the CDC and have been issued certain personal protective equipment (PPE) to use should the circumstances of a police response require their use.

### Emergency Order #12: SAFER AT HOME

The Waunakee Police Department has fielded several questions regarding the Safer At Home order issued by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers. Waunakee Police have also been asked by residents if they could get permission from police for non-essential travel. This order was issued by the Governor for the health and welfare of the citizens of Wisconsin. We want to be clear that the police cannot override the Governor's order and grant approval for non-essential travel that would be in violation of the order. Police are also not the decision makers in regards to what businesses are deemed essential. Below we have broken down the list taken from Emergency Order #12 to hopefully answer some questions you may have.

#### **Under this order, Wisconsin residents are able to:**

- Perform tasks essential to maintain health and safety, such as obtaining medicine or seeing a doctor
- Get necessary services or supplies for themselves or their family or household members, such as getting food and supplies, pet food and supplies necessary for staying at home
- Care for a family member in another household
- Care for older adults, minors, dependents, people with disabilities or other vulnerable persons

#### **Businesses allowed to operate under the order include, but are not limited to:**

- Health care operations, including home health workers
- Critical infrastructure
- Businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable individuals
- Fresh and non-perishable food retailers, including convenience stores, grocery stores, farmers' markets, and food banks

- Businesses that ship or deliver groceries, food and goods directly to residences
- Pharmacies, health care supply stores and health care facilities
- Child care facilities, with some limitations
- Gas stations and auto repair facilities
- Banks
- Laundry businesses, dry cleaners and services necessary for maintaining the safety, sanitation and essential operation of a residence, including garbage collection
- Hardware stores, plumbers, and electricians
- Educational institutions, for the purposes of facilitating distance learning
- Roles required for any business to maintain minimum basic operations, which includes security, and payroll
- Law and safety, and essential government functions will continue under the recommended action

\*If a business is unsure about whether or not they are exempted from this order, please contact the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation at: <https://wedc.org>

**The public is strongly encouraged follow these simple steps to prevent illness and avoid exposure to this virus including:**

- Avoid social gatherings with people of all ages (including playdates and sleepovers, parties, large family dinners, visitors in your home, non-essential workers in your house);
- Frequent and thorough hand washing with soap and water;
- Covering coughs and sneezes;
- Avoiding touching your face; and
- Staying home



## Waunakee Police would also like to clear up some rumors that are being spread, primarily through social media:

- Police Officers will not be making random traffic stops to check if a person has been deemed “essential” by their employer
- There is no paperwork that is required to be carried by people to prove they have been deemed “essential” by their employer
- Using the open spaces in parks is not a violation of the Safer At Home order as long as you are alone or with people who live in your home
- All playgrounds and ball courts are closed. This is because it is possible the COVID-19 virus could be on equipment or anything an infected person may touch.
- Playing catch or any game where multiple people touch the same item must only be done with people who live in your home. Again, it is possible the virus could be on anything you touch so playing catch with someone you do not live with could expose you to the virus
- Officers are still enforcing state laws, including traffic laws
- Residents are permitted (and encouraged) to conduct outdoor activities such as, walking, biking, hiking etc. so long as they abide by the social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet between anyone that does not live in your home. Contact sports are not permitted due to the social distancing requirements.
- A person could be cited for violating the order; however, officers have been directed to use their judgment and if they see a violation or receive a complaint of a violation they may first remind the violators of the requirements and hopefully gain compliance. If a person/s refuses to comply with the order a citation could be issued. We do not want to cite anyone for violating the order as it is for your safety and the safety of your loved ones. We hope people would use good judgement and common sense to comply for their safety.

There is a lot of misinformation that gets spread on social media. We caution you to not believe everything you see from those sources and encourage people to check with a government website or FAQ page for the most accurate and up-to-date information.

## Crime Alert!

Burglaries and vehicle thefts have been a big problem in the Dane County area for the last few years but recently there has been another spike in these types of crimes. Do not get complacent with your valuables or your homes, these crimes are continuing to happen even with COVID-19 concerns! Waunakee Police have investigated recent suspicious vehicle complaints where the vehicle turned out to be stolen. These criminals are in town looking to steal more vehicles or commit burglaries. There was also a recent report of a vehicle that was stolen in Madison and was seen in Waunakee within an hour of being reported stolen.

The common theme amongst these criminals is they look for unlocked vehicles or doors and open garages. Waunakee Police patrol staff report there are still many garage doors left open throughout the village of Waunakee each night. The best way you can protect yourself from becoming the victim of a vehicle theft or a burglary is simply to Lock it Up! Lock your vehicle doors, your house doors (Including garage service doors) and CLOSE GARAGE DOORS at night. Forced entry burglaries and car theft is very rare. These crimes are almost always crimes of opportunity. Take this opportunity away by routinely checking that your property is secure and locked.

Always report suspicious activity immediately by calling 911 or 608-849-4523 (Non-emergency).





## State law requires drivers to yield to pedestrians

1. Who have started crossing an intersection or crosswalk on a walk signal or on a green light if there's no walk signal. ( Please note: drivers do not need to stop for pedestrians waiting on the side of the road/curb and are not in the act of crossing the road)
2. Who are crossing the road within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection where there are no traffic lights or control signals.
3. When a vehicle is crossing a sidewalk or entering an alley or driveway.
4. Pedestrians must give a driver enough space to safely yield to the pedestrian before leaving the curb or area of safety.

In addition, drivers may not legally overtake and pass any vehicle that has stopped for pedestrians at an intersection or crosswalk. Drivers who fail to yield the right of way to pedestrians who are legally crossing roadways in the Village of Waunakee may be issued citations in amounts ranging from **\$98.80 - \$250.00** (depending on the violation) and 3-4 demerit points. We have plans to perform pedestrian/crosswalk enforcement in the near future.



## Tornado Awareness

April 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> is Wisconsin's Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week. Wisconsin Emergency Management, the National Weather Service (NWS) and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA) have once again teamed up to sponsor the state-wide tornado drills scheduled for Thursday, April 12.

A mock tornado watch will be issued April 16<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m., followed by a state-wide mock tornado warning at 1:45 p.m. Many radio and TV stations across the state will issue the test tornado warnings. In addition, mock alerts will be issued on NOAA Weather Radios and many communities will sound their tornado sirens to test their emergency severe weather plans. Later, a mock tornado warning will be issued at 6:45 p.m. to give families and second-shift workers a chance to practice their emergency plans.



## Facebook

Please "like" 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.

## 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.