

INDEPENDENCE POLICE

November 2009

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 1, 2009
Block Captain Meeting
Truman High School
Room 240
7:00 PM

January 5, 2010
Neighborhood Watch
Awards Ceremony
Location TBD

November 19, 2009
H1N1 Clinic
Independence Health Dept.
515 S. Liberty
Call 325-7182

H1N1 STRIKES HOME

Like other parts of the country, the Greater Kansas City region has seen an increase in cases of influenza in recent weeks - much earlier than the normal beginning of flu season.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), almost all current cases of influenza are due to the H1N1 virus rather than normal seasonal flu.

While most cases of flu are relatively mild, several deaths have been reported in the region due to H1N1. The best line of defense against the flu is prevention, and most area residents are now familiar with the basic recommendations to keep from getting sick: get a seasonal flu shot, wash hands frequently, cover coughs and sneezes, and stay home when you are sick.

Flu symptoms are often similar to the symptoms of colds and other respiratory illnesses, but there are several key differences that can

help those who become ill determine whether they have a cold or flu:

- A fever is usually present with flu, but rarely with a cold
- Body aches and fatigue are generally more severe with flu
- Headaches and chills are more common with flu than with a cold
- Coughs are generally dry and unproductive with flu, but

productive with a cold

- Chest discomfort is likely to be more severe with the flu
- Flu patients generally have a decreased appetite, while those with a cold have a normal appetite
- Vomiting and diarrhea may be present with flu, but are uncommon with colds
- The onset of symptoms is usually sudden with flu and more gradual with a cold.

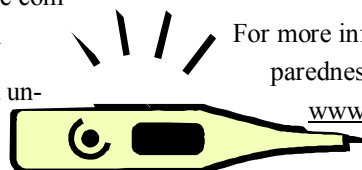
Most people who develop flu-like symptoms can expect to feel sick for two to four days and recover without medical care.

People in high-risk categories, however, should contact their physicians right away if they suspect they may have the flu. Symptoms of H1N1 flu can be lessened by treatment with antiviral medications, but only if the medication is begun in the first 48 hours. High-risk categories include:

- Pregnant women
- Caregivers for children younger than six months of age
- Young people under age 24
- Anyone with a chronic health condition associated with a higher risk of complications from flu.

For more information about regional preparedness efforts, visit:

www.preparemetrokc.org



Bulletin!!!

I received this information inter-department. The website, www.preparemetrokc.org is a wonderful resource for all of us wishing to practice a more proactive approach to community preparedness!

HOW TO HANDLE A SUSPECTED DRUG HOUSE

A Note From Rob...

Drug houses are a problem that can plague any community. It is important to make a stand against drug houses in our community. Even if you think that it is a small or low volume drug house, it is a problem that needs to be addressed. Drug houses bring drug users, gangs, and criminals into neighborhoods. In addition, these individuals are known for carrying weapons, additional dangerous drugs or other items that can put all of us in harms way.

When disturbances occur at drug houses, guns can come into play. When a gun is fired, the bullet does not discriminate. A bullet does not know the difference between a drug user and a citizen, an adult or a child. If you believe that if you leave a drug house alone, it will leave you alone, you are wrong. You put yourself at risk, your neighbors at risk, and any other innocent bystander in the area.

As a member of the blockwatch program, it is your duty to report drug houses, and to take a stand against these individuals. Lets take our streets back, one drug house at a time.

WHAT CAUSES A DRUG HOUSE :

Many factors go into the forming of a drug house, perhaps the most basic is simple economics. On a basic level, drug dealers have a hard to obtain, highly desired product.

Drug users have an addiction, a need for the product. Drug users become so desperate to get the drugs that they will steal cheat and hurt those that they love to get the illegal substances.

Drug dealers prey on the vulnerabilities of the users, having them purchase their product for what is usually a hefty profit. This easy profit is what motivates most drug dealers to make the risk.

WHAT DRUG DEALERS LIKE :

Typically, drug dealers look for houses in communities where individuals keep to themselves. By nature, drug dealers are extremely paranoid individuals. Often just seeing two people on the street corner talking, will send them into a frenzy believing that they are being discussed.

Drug dealers also like to isolate themselves in their houses. They will board up windows and doors, cover all of the windows so no one can see in, and limit interaction with other neighbors.

Drug dealers often favor rental property, as often it is difficult for them to obtain home loans. Drug dealers prefer run-down properties where the landlord will not get involved with their activities.

Most of all, drug dealers like to live in areas where they have control. Where they know that citizens are afraid. This empowers them, while tearing down the fabric of your community.

HOW TO HANDLE A DRUG HOUSE

Naturally, if you suspect any criminal activity, do not confront the resident of the house. Neighborhood watch is about being the eyes and ears of the police department, not the enforcement power. Weapons, as well as dangerous criminals can frequent and become involved with drug houses.

If you suspect a drug house in your neighborhood, keep track of activity. Make note when peak traffic occurs, noting if it is mostly day, evening or night.

Try to look for patterns in vehicles or people coming to or from the residence. What direction do they come in from, what direction do they leave.

Try to identify vehicles. Be specific. A license, or partial license number is preferred, but if you use identifiers make sure they are correct. For example, if you report seeing a gray car making a drug transaction, then leave the area, this is not very helpful to us. However, if you say a gray, 4-door, late 90's, Ford Crown Victoria, with chrome wheels, a damaged front fender, and partial Missouri license ABC, this is a great description that could help us identify the vehicle as it drives down the street. Recently, a radio broadcast led officers to a suspect vehicle 2 days later. The result was a felony arrest for drug possession.

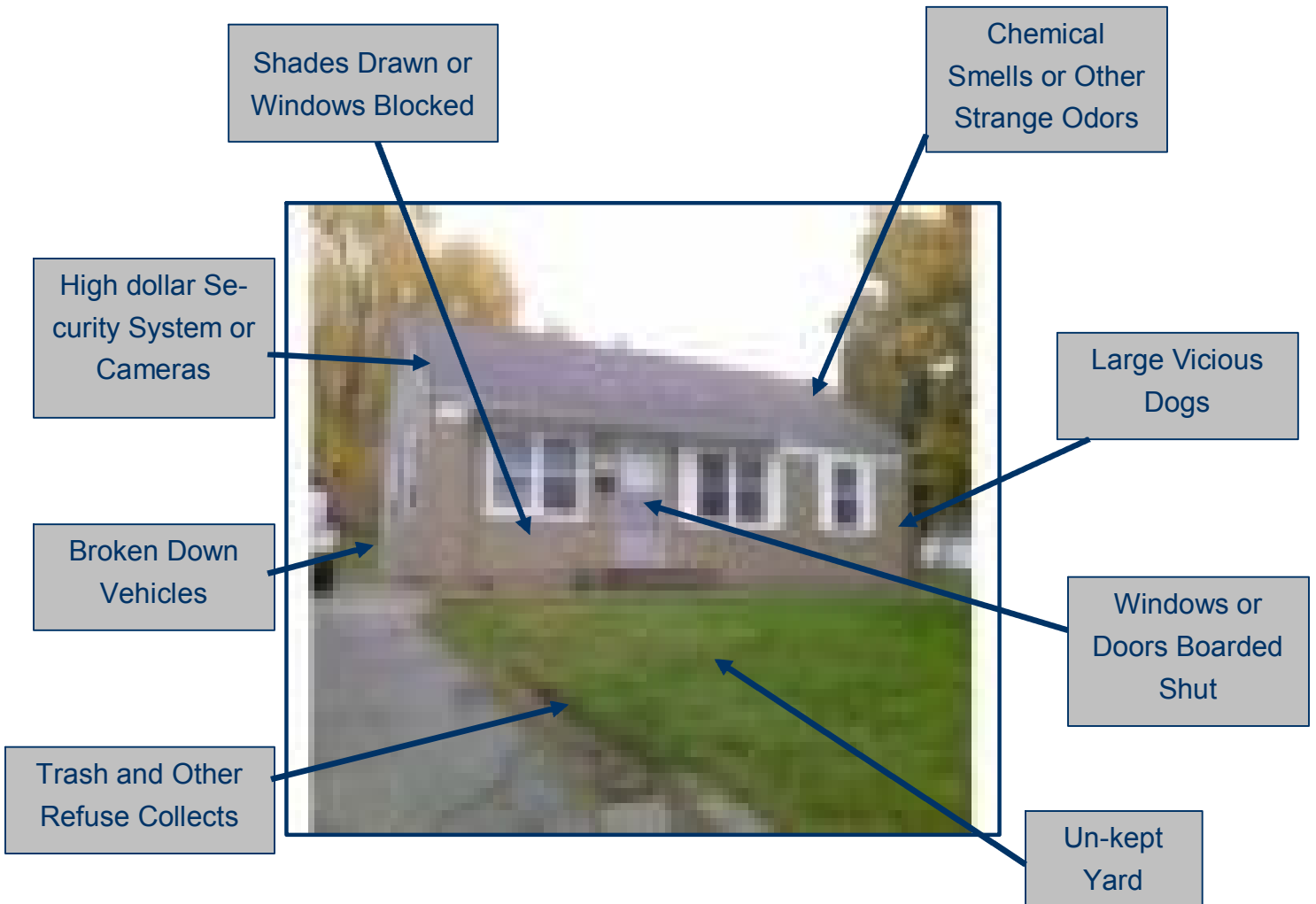
Keep a log of activity. If you have a good log, and would like to turn it in, let me know. I can make sure it makes it through the proper chain of command.

As always, you can always make anonymous tips. Our drug hotline for Independence is 325-NARC (325-6272). This number is a voice mail system, but your call will be returned (if you leave a name and number).

HOW TO IDENTIFY A SUSPECTED DRUG HOUSE

Drug houses come in all shapes and sizes. Although there is no one set of rules that each house conforms to, we can look for indicators that might show that suspicious, or drug related activity may be occurring. I have divided this into two separate categories, physical characteristics and environmental characteristics. It is important to remember that just because a residence may show indicators, it DOES NOT make it a drug house. It is important to report activity to the police department, so that we can investigate.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:



ENVIROMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- **Excessive foot or car traffic.**
- **Loitering.**
- **Short visits by multiple individuals.**
- **Resident will meet cars or people outside, conduct hand transaction, then everyone separates.**
- **Individuals in neighborhood that do not belong, and exhibit odd behavior.**
- **Sudden increase of criminal activity in neighborhood.**
- **Owner or resident will leave multiple times during the day for short periods.**

E-mail us your articles

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**INDEPENDENCE
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

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Return Service Requested

**HELPING TO KEEP OUR
NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE.**

FEATURED BLOCK WATCH “BELLEVISTA CRIMEWATCH”

This month's featured blockwatch group is the Bellevista Crimewatch. The Bellevista Crimewatch is located in central Independence, just south and east of 23rd Street and Noland. I contacted Captains Lloyd Slaght and Don Smith to speak with them about their group.

Lloyd advised that the group encompasses the 100 homes associated with the Bellevista Annex Sub-division. The group was originally formed 11 years ago, and continues to be a strong community force in the area.

As far as group activities, Lloyd points out that the summer block-parties are always well received and attended. The block parties focus on not only the adults

but the children, as the group secures play inflatables, as well as partake in many outdoor games.

In addition to the block parties, members participate in bi-annual garage sales and quarterly luncheons. In addition, the four area captains assist with passing out the neighborhood watch newsletters, as well as other pertinent information.

Lloyd points out that being a tight community aides in the deterrence of would be criminals. Numerous community members who frequently walk the neighborhoods keep a constant eye on the neighborhood and report suspicious activity. Strangers are quickly identified and watched.

A lack of a community meeting area does restrict the number of meetings the group has per year. Lloyd advises this forces them to plan meetings during times in which good weather will permit the meetings to be held outside. Meetings are generally focused, often when there is a topic critical to the community.

Lloyd and Don advise that getting people involved is a key to a successful neighborhood watch program. Over the years they have both worked hard on keeping the list of participants updated.

For their longevity, and continued hard-work, the Bellevista Crimewatch is the November Group of the month.