



COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Westminster Police Department

Andrew E. Hall, Chief of Police

admin@ewpd.org

Produced by the Administrative Services Bureau

April – June 2009

Volume 7 Issue 2

INDEPENDENCE DAY REMINDER

Fireworks and celebrations go together, especially during the Fourth of July. But fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. That's why the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and its national and state partners strongly recommend: Leave fireworks to the professionals!

All consumer fireworks in Westminster are illegal. This includes sparklers that are mistakenly thought to be safe. They actually burn at extremely high temperatures which can rapidly burn through clothing and skin. Fireworks lead to thousands of injuries requiring emergency room treatment each year. These dazzling, but dangerous devices can burn up to 1200F and can cause burns, lacerations, amputations and blindness.

Stay safe by always leaving fireworks to professionals.

Stay back at least 500 feet from professional fireworks displays.

Treat all fireworks, whether legal or illegal for consumers, as suitable only for use by trained professionals.

If you find fireworks, do not touch them but instead direct authorities to them.

Leave any area where amateurs are using fireworks.



Words from Chief Hall

Today marks a period of significant change for the Westminster Police Department from the retirement of senior officers to construction of the new facility. These changes may transform the appearance of W.P.D., but they will not alter the spirit of service, excellence and pride that hallmark this department.

There is no doubt these retirements will save the city a great deal of money, and I have no doubt the opportunities for growth and promotion of current employees will bring new energy and ideas to the department. Even so, the loss of so much experience at one time will create

a difficult set of challenges for all of us.

The same is true with our new facility which will vastly improve the quality and quantity of resources available to the police and community. Even so, the reconfiguration of the department will present us with challenges.

As always, we will strive to do our very best to protect and serve faithfully. We ask the community to help us by providing feedback, presenting ideas and continuing to partner with us.

Thank you for your continued support.

Community Feedback



Members of the community often take the time to let us know how the Police Department is doing. We appreciate your letters, emails, and phone calls. Hearing from you is the best way for us to ensure that we are serving your needs. As always, we strive to provide the best public safety services to each and every one in Westminster.

Submit Feedback to:
*Ja'Nelle Belton, WPD Police
Services Officer – Community
Relations*
*Email: [jbelton@westminster-
ca.gov](mailto:jbelton@westminster-ca.gov)*

buzzed driving is drunk driving

Every 40 minutes and nearly 40 times a day, someone in the United States dies in an alcohol impaired traffic crash according to research by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. That is why Westminster Police Department, along with other highway safety, community health and law enforcement officials are reminding everyone this Fourth of July that Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving and to designate a sober driver before the celebrations begin.

Alcohol is a major factor in fatal crashes during the July 4th holiday.

- In 2007, 34 percent of all drivers involved in traffic related crashes during the Fourth of July holiday period (6:00PM TUESDAY JULY 3 TO 5:59 AM THURSDAY JULY 5, 2007) possessed a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher.
- During the July 4th holiday period there were a total of 200 traffic related fatalities. Out of that number, 44 percent involved a driver or motorcycle rider with a BAC of .08 or higher.
- In 2007, 41,059 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes. Out of that number 12,998 people were killed in traffic crashes that involved at least one driver or motorcycle rider with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher.

Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin so you can be

alive to enjoy the next celebration.

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin.
- Before drinking, please designate a sober driver and give that person your keys.
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation so you are sure to get home safely.
- If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact local law enforcement.

Whether you've had way too many or just one too many, it's not worth the risk. Impaired driving has serious consequences. The tragedies and costs from drinking and driving impaired do not just end at the potential death, disfigurement, disability and injury caused by impaired drivers.

Driving with a BAC of .08 or higher is illegal in every state. Yet too many people still ignore the law. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report over 1.4 million people were arrested for driving under the influence during 2006.

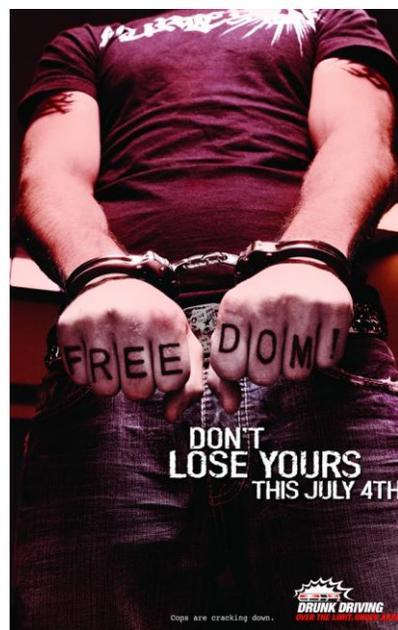
Driving impaired or riding with someone who is impaired is not worth the risk. The consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant and not the way you want to celebrate the July 4th holiday.

People that break the law, often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses from attorney fees, other fines and court costs, car towing and repairs, lost time at work, etc.

**Over the Limit. Under Arrest.
This Fourth of July**

This summer, don't let your Fourth of July end in an arrest—or even worse, death. Make smart decisions. Plan ahead, so you can assure a safe way home. Whether you've had way too many or just one too many, it's not worth the risk.

Remember, Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving. Don't ever get behind a wheel of a vehicle when you are impaired.



START SMART DRIVING PROGRAM



On Tuesday, April 21, 2009, members of the Westminster Police Department Traffic Division in cooperation with the California Highway Patrol, made a traffic safety presentation to the senior class at Westminster High School. Safe driving techniques via the CHP's START SMART driving

program were the key elements presented through discussion, video presentation and a question/answer period.

Students and faculty participated as impaired drivers, wearing the "FATAL VISION" goggles, which give the wearer the visual impression of being under the influence of alcohol. Field sobriety tests were given and some participants peddled a tricycle through a cone pattern while wearing the goggles.



The students also enjoyed watching their teachers and school staff ride the tricycle into the cones, while wearing the FATAL VISION goggles. Each student received hand-outs including "Every 15 Minutes" program playing cards, temporary anti-drinking and driving tattoos and key chains.

NEW CITY MANAGER



City Council cast their votes and on May 1, 2009; the City of Westminister welcomed Donald D. Lamm as our new City Manager.

On May 4, 2009, WPD personnel were invited to an informal meeting with the new City Manager to discuss who he is and what he plans to do for the city. Of this new venture, Mr. Lamm said he is looking forward to the opportunities and the challenges that come with the job. We know that he is well equipped to handle anything that may come his way. The future of the City of Westminister is bright with Donald D. Lamm as City Manager.

MAYOR RICE'S PRAYER BREAKFAST



On May 7, 2009, The Westminister Prayer Breakfast Committee and Mayor Margie Rice joined business and civic leaders of Westminister for the 15th Annual Westminister Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.

This event is patterned after the National Prayer Breakfast held annually in Washington, D.C. It is designed to be a forum for political, social and business leaders of the community to assemble together and build relationships which might not otherwise be possible.

"It is, of course, the Golden Rule-- the call to love one another...To understand one another; to treat with dignity and respect those with whom we share a brief moment on this Earth."

-President Obama at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington on February 5, 2009.

Community Coalition Human Trafficking Meeting



Human trafficking refers to transportation of persons for forced labor, sexual exploitation or other illicit activities. It is estimated that more than one million people are trafficked annually around the world; some experts say it could be double that.

Human trafficking has become global businesses that generate huge profits for traffickers and organize criminal groups. Because of its clandestine nature, human trafficking is likely to remain an increasingly underreported crime. In an effort to raise awareness, on May 13, 2009, the Westminister Community Coalition for Safe and Healthy Youth held a meeting to address this problem.



At the meeting Mark Abend, the Group Supervisor for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), shared his experience involving human trafficking by telling about his first human trafficking victim Shyima whom he met in 2001.

At age seven, Shyima went with her mother to visit her sister, who was working as a slave for a family. The family told the mother they didn't want the girl anymore,

so the mother left Shyima there to take the sister's place. Her job was to take care of twin boys (who were almost as old as she was) and to clean the bathrooms. The family moved to America where Shyima took on extra duties of cleaning, laundry and doing dishes. They lived in a million dollar house with plenty of room yet Shyima was made to sleep in the garage.

Shyima was in attendance at the meeting to share her experiences as a victim of human trafficking. When she was 12, a neighbor called authorities and told them she believed there was a child living in the home who did not go to school. After her rescue, Shyima was extremely afraid because she had been told if the police came they would arrest her and her family, and that her family would lose a lot of money. After being rescued she was adopted by a loving family. It was not until she was in high school that Shyima realized she had been a victim and by then she had learned enough English that she could start talking about it. Shyima is now a healthy well adjusted 19 year old. She is attending college, and plans to go into law enforcement.

Sandie Morgan, the Administrator of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF), introduced Maria whom she had met at a women's prison. Maria served 22½ years for a murder she did not commit.

At age 16, Maria came to America with her family with the hope of finding a better place for her to live. Her family went back home, leaving Maria with her sister. One day Maria was approached by a woman asking her if she wanted a job cleaning houses and answering phones stipulating that Maria was not to tell her family about it until it had been worked out.

After some time, the woman came again and took Maria to meet the employer. The ride to meet the employer was long, Maria did not know where she was and she became very nervous. Once there, Maria noticed numerous locks on the windows and doors. Even the phone had a lock on it. She kept telling them she wanted to go home but they always had an excuse as to why they would take her later.

Finally, one day the man told her she belonged to him because he paid \$200 for her and she was his slave. He cut her beautiful long hair and told her the only way she was going to leave the house was if she died. After years of rape and abuse, a neighbor killed the man. Maria was handed the weapon and instructed to clean it up and hide it under the porch, which she did. Because of her actions, and due to not having a good attorney, Maria spent years in prison. While there, she learned English and was able to obtain an education while helping others.

When Dr. Elizabeth Leonard* was interviewing Maria in prison, she realized Maria had been a victim of human trafficking. Maria did not realize she had been a victim. Dr. Leonard was able to arrange for qualified attorneys who were successful in getting Maria out of jail.

Since then, Maria has been invited to speak at the United Nations. She currently works for the National Council of Jewish Women, Recovery Center for Women and facilitates various counseling groups.

** Dr. Elizabeth Dermody Leonard is Professor of Sociology at Vanguard University. Her main areas of research and publishing are intimate partner violence, women prisoners, and child sexual abuse. Dr. Leonard's research on battered women who kill their abusers is being used by legislators, law professors, and advocates for convicted battered women.*



WPOA MEMORIAL CEREMONY

On Wednesday, May 13, 2009, the Westminster Police Department held its third annual Police Memorial Ceremony at the Police Officers Memorial in the Civic Center. As you may know the memorial was constructed in 2007 to honor the first two officers, Lieutenant Ron Weber and Officer Steve Phillips, who lost their lives in the service of the Westminster community. Sergeant Marcus Frank was added last year after he passed away from complications due to a work related illness.



The ceremony is held each year during National Police Officers Memorial week. During this year's ceremony, Chief Hall stressed the importance of having the memorial to honor the manner in which each of the officers lived their lives. Included in the ceremony was a special presentation to Mrs. Rosie Wilkins, the wife of Westminster Police Chaplain Charlie Wilkins who recently passed away. Mrs. Wilkins received a large, framed photograph of her husband captured by Officer Alan Iwashita during a wedding ceremony earlier this year.



DEMILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S OFFICER APPRECIATION



In celebration of National Police Officers Memorial Week, on May 20, 2009, students of DeMille Elementary hosted an officer appreciation lunch. Additionally, each student “adopted” an officer as a pen pal. Their letters were delivered to each of our officers who in turn wrote back to each of the students.

We appreciate the efforts of these students and their generosity did not go unnoticed.



Accident Causing Violations and Problem Areas



In reviewing Crossroads traffic collision statistics from January 1, 2009 to present, there were 601 reported collisions. Seventy-Two percent (72%) or 435 of the collisions were non-injury, and 28 percent (28%) or 166 were injury resulting in 222 injured parties.

Unsafe speed was determined to be the primary collision factor in 25% of the collisions, *right of way* violations were responsible for 12.5% of the collisions and *unsafe*

turning movements 12% of the collisions. Seventy-six percent (76%) or 457 of the collisions occurred during the week, with a majority occurring Wednesday-Friday. Sixteen percent (16%) or 96 occurred on Wednesday, 15% or 92 on Thursday and 17% or 104 on Friday compared to 14% occurring on Saturday and 10% on Sunday.

The top 10 high incident intersections for the same time period are by order of rank (1-10): (1) Beach and Westminster, (2) Beach and Trask, (3) Beach and Bolsa, (4) Goldenwest and Bolsa, (5) Goldenwest and Westminster, (6) Goldenwest and Westminster Mall Access Rd., (7) Magnolia and Bolsa, (8) Newland and Hazard, (9) Magnolia and McFadden, and a tie for tenth place between (10) McFadden and Bushard and (10) Westminster and Willow.

CELL PHONE LAW VIOATIONS



Since January of this year, Traffic and Patrol Officers have written a total of **463** cell phone citations, to drivers who refuse to obey the law requiring a hands free device while talking and driving. The law was put in place partly (based on traffic statistics) because a number of drivers, who had been involved in collisions, admitted to using their cell phones, at the time of the collision. It is unmistakably evident that using a cell phone is a distraction to drivers.

Thanks to all, who stopped and warned or cited violators. I have no doubt that you helped to better educate these drivers and reduced traffic collisions caused by inattention.

NEW FACES



Officer Kees Davis with Chief Hall



Dispatcher Linette Milligan

On Tuesday, June 9, 2009, our WPD family grew by two. Our newest full time employees are Officer Kees Davis, who was reclassified from Reserve Officer to full time Police Officer in April of this year, and Dispatcher Linette Milligan. Both were sworn in at a ceremony attended by family, friends and WPD personnel.

Please join us in welcoming them
to WPD!

Click it or Ticket *Seatbelt Enforcement Saturation for May*



Thanks to everyone who worked so diligently on seatbelt enforcement during the saturation in the month of May. This year's *Next Generation Click It or Ticket* campaign is year long. It began in November with a saturation and is going to end in September. During the months between saturations we had 1-4 officers working seatbelt enforcement, working five-hour shifts. During the saturation months of November and May, there were 20-25 (5 hour) slots of overtime for seatbelt enforcement.

The May saturation this year netted **169** seatbelt citations.

Thanks for all of your hard work. Many of you wrote a number of seatbelt tickets, whether you were working CIOT, or just conducting routine traffic stops during your tour of duty. The top five ticket writers for May were:

Officer Ken Pate	47
Officer Paul Walker	25
Officer Jim Delk	23
Officer Jeremy Fletcher	15
Officer Matt Edinger	9

RETIREMENTS

There comes a point in all of our lives when we realize that we have reached the end of our career. Please join us in wishing seven of our dedicated colleagues the best as they enter this new phase in their lives.



Sergeant Mark Groh
40 Years of Service



Sergeant Tom Broderson
29 Years of Service



Sergeant John Leahy
28 Years of Service



Officer Jim Gist
20 Years of Service



Officer Clemente Bustos
16 Years of Service



Officer Scott Storey
16 Years of Service



Special Services Assistant
Doreen van Lith
25 Years of Service

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THIS COMMUNITY. IT WAS A PLEASURE WORKING WITH YOU AND WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST. CONGRATULATIONS!!

WPD EXPLORER PROGRAM



Explorers John Carrasco, Jesse Carrasco and Warner Rich



Explorer Thomas Nadolski

Explorers Warner Rich, Jesse Carrasco, John Carrasco and Thomas Nadolski graduated from the Orange County Law Enforcement Explorer Advisors Association (O.C.L.E.E.A.A.) Police Academy.

This year's academy was held at the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base. The Explorer Academy is a 5-day, live-in, intense academy designed to challenge Explorers physically, mentally, and emotionally to achieve goals greater than that which they thought capable of obtaining. During the Explorer Academy, Explorers participate in numerous law enforcement related training classes (classroom and hands-on) and physical training. They are required to take both written and physical tests on the last day with the expectancy that all Explorers maintain a grade point average (G.P.A.) of 2.0.

This program is mandatory to all police explorers in O.C.L.E.E.A.A. and they must attend the academy within one year of joining a post.

At the conclusion, the academy explorers who have shown exceptional abilities in areas of physical agility, writing and academics are recognized with awards.

Explorer Warner Rich was awarded first place in physical fitness at the graduation. The next academy is scheduled in August at the USMC Camp Pendleton facility.

Explorer meetings are held the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Westminster Police Department at 7:00 pm. Individuals interested in joining the Westminster Police Explorer Post can show up for a meeting and contact an advisor for an application.

TORCH RUN FOR THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS



On June 12, 2009, our department participated in the 2009 Southern California Law Enforcement Torch Run for the Special Olympics.

WPD received the torch from Garden Grove PD at the intersection of Garden Grove Blvd. and Goldenwest St. WPD handed off the torch to Fountain Valley PD at the intersection of Magnolia St. and Edinger Ave.



COUNTERFEIT SEIZURE



The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) recently completed a month long investigation into the sales of counterfeit items. During the investigation, undercover detectives met with the suspects and made purchases of counterfeit clothing. The information gathered during the investigation allowed detectives to obtain a search warrant for the suspect's residence. When the warrant was served, detectives recovered over \$50,000 in brand name counterfeit products.

Curtailling the sales of counterfeit products in Little Saigon has been one of the main focuses of the SIU. Businesses who deal in counterfeit products undermine the success of legitimate businesses. Since January of 2008, the SIU has seized more than \$1,000,000 in counterfeit goods including jewelry, clothing, purses, and other retail items.

FLAG DAY

In honor of Flag Day, the City of Westminster held a celebratory ceremony. The day was marked by patriotic music and reflective remarks by Mayor Margie L. Rice.



In the midst of a war for our Nation's independence, on June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress adopted a flag as a symbol of our fledgling Union. The Congress resolved that the flag be "thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen

stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." For generations to come, this pattern would serve as a compass bearing toward equality and justice for all.

Our flag's journey has been long. It has seen our Nation through war and peace, triumph and tragedy. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Old Glory flew over the southwestern wall of the Pentagon and the rubble of the World Trade Center. Today, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces bear our flag as they serve bravely around the world.

The flag is still more than a historical symbol: it is part of our culture. In our schools, children pledge allegiance to our flag and recite the ideals upon which our Nation was founded. Families sit on their front porches under a billowing Stars and Stripes. And each day as the flag is raised above military installations and government buildings, we are reminded of the great sacrifices that have been made in defense of our Nation.

The Stars and Stripes tells our Nation's story and embodies its highest ideals. Its display reminds us of America's promise and guides us toward a brighter tomorrow.

NEW POLICE VEHICLES



The new Dodge Charger patrol vehicles are now in service. Not only is there a change of body style from the Ford vehicles, we have

also changed the graphics and gone from the traditional black and white to an all black vehicle.

The Dodge Charger police vehicle was designed from the ground up in order to meet the needs of law enforcement agencies. Police-specific features include greater stability and improved handling achieved through a “wheels-to-the-corners” design; performance-tuned steering and suspension; convenient shifter mounted on the instrument panel to make room for police equipment in the center console area; police interior lighting shines white to illuminate the interior and red for use with night vision equipment; heavy-duty seats accommodate fully equipped officers; and a spacious trunk.

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY UPDATE

During the past two months, the City of Westminster experienced an increased number of residential burglaries throughout the city. A majority of the burglaries occurred during the day when residents are typically away at work, school, etc. Our neighboring jurisdictions have also seen a spike in this crime.



While some of the burglaries are random, WPD detectives believe that many of them are being committed by a group of individuals who move from city to city. Fortunately, WPD detectives are in constant communication with surrounding law enforcement agencies and have shared critical information. Due to collaborative efforts of information sharing, investigation, crime analysis and working with forensic services, a

suspect in possession of stolen property was taken into custody and booked into Orange County Jail.

GROUNDBREAKING FOR NEW POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING



June 23, 2009 marked the groundbreaking ceremony of the new Westminster Police Department headquarters building and the beginning of the two year construction project. The police headquarters project is part of an overall revitalization plan for the Westminster Civic Center that will also include a 650 space parking structure to address the parking shortages in the area. The Civic Center is home to many government services including: City Hall, the Senior Center, Police Department, Community Services, West Justice Center Superior Court, and a county library. Neighboring the Civic Center is the Westminster Rose Theatre, Crystal Catering banquet facility, and the Coastline Community College Le Jao Center.



The new police headquarters will provide an efficient and modern building designed to enhance the delivery of police services and meet the energy efficiency goals set

by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) requirements. It will include an upgraded 911 communications center capable of housing shared regional law enforcement communications, a new forensic lab for evidence processing, increased evidence storage capacity, an Emergency Operations Center, a Type I jail facility, and work space sufficient to handle the current and future needs of the police department.

The timing of the project has enabled the City of Westminster to bring job growth to the area while taking advantage of a more competitive construction environment saving the City nearly \$6M from early cost projections. The City contracted with Griffin Structures, Inc., its program management firm, to construct the building in partnership with McCarthy, Inc. providing construction management services, utilizing a guaranteed maximum price strategy. The 92,000 square foot police headquarters building will be constructed for a maximum price of \$54,352,000.

The new police headquarters is part of the Infrastructure Revitalization Plan (IRP) implemented in 2002. The purpose of the IRP was to keep local property tax dollars working locally to improve various infrastructure projects within the community. By using IRP funds to pay for the new police headquarters, no new taxes will be imposed upon the community—a responsible approach given the current economic climate.

The existing police building was completed in 1968 and was the location for Westminster’s City Hall and later its police department. The 40 year old building was designed to accommodate approximately 60-65 employees and a small temporary holding

facility for police arrestees. Today, the Westminster Police Department employs nearly 200 full and part-time employees, plus a cadre of volunteers. The new police headquarters is expected to be completed in May 2011.

ASIAN EXTORTION SCHEME

The FBI is currently investigating a nationwide attempt to extort ethnic business owners, mostly of Asian nationality, through telephonic threats of violence. The calls appear to be originating from foreign countries. The caller acquires an adequate amount of open source information about the victim through Internet searches. This misleads the victim into believing the subject has personal knowledge about the victim. There have been no reported incidents of violence actually perpetrated to date.

Individuals who receive phone calls or e-mails containing threats of violence and their personally identifiable information (PII) are encouraged to contact law enforcement as well as file a complaint at www.ic3.gov.



PROPERTY & EVIDENCE DIVISION

The Property Division is staffed by two full time civilian employees and one part time position. The hours of operation are Monday to Friday 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Property releases are done by appointment only. Please contact the Property Division at (714) 898-3315 x309 for an appointment or any questions on property including lost items.

The Property Division is responsible for the storage of property and evidence items which include found, safekeeping, and

evidence items. Property personnel maintain documented records of all items turned in and the chain of custody following the item as it enters and leaves the Property Division. They handle the release of items, destruction of contraband items and auctioning of unclaimed property items.

Unclaimed items and surplus city property are sent to auction approximately 3-5 times a year. G.A.C. (General Auction Company) is our current auction provider and is located in Buena Park. You can contact them at (714) 670-8510 or www.generalauction.com for information on upcoming auctions.

DID YOU MEAN TO CALL 9-1-1?



Misuse and abuse of 9-1-1 is a prevalent problem throughout the country. The Westminster Police Department received approximately 10,000 unintentional 9-1-1 calls in 2008, accounting for 30% of all 9-1-1 calls received. It is impossible to determine the number of intentional 9-1-1 calls received that were not actual emergencies. Unintentional and misuse of 9-1-1 calls use up valuable time and resources for dispatchers and responding police officers and impact the integrity of the 9-1-1 system.

Unintentional 9-1-1 Calls

Unintentional calls occur when a person or phone inadvertently dials 9-1-1. This includes phantom wireless calls, misdials and hang-up calls.

Phantom Wireless 9-1-1 Calls occur for the following reasons:

Automatic dialing - If a cell phone user inadvertently presses the 9 or 1 key on a phone preprogrammed to dial 9-1-1, the phone automatically dials 9-1-1, even without the user having to press "send." This often happens when a wireless phone is attached to a belt or in a pocket or purse, and the 9 or 1 is bumped. Most wireless users are unaware their phones are preprogrammed to dial 9-1-1. To avoid this from happening, disengage the automatic 9-1-1 dialing feature.

Redialing or resending - After completing a 9-1-1 call, if a wireless caller accidentally presses or bumps the "redial" or "send" key, the phone dials 9-1-1 again. (Note that landline users may also accidentally redial 9-1-1 this way.)

Random dialing - Some older wireless phones dial 9-1-1 when the phone's batteries are low. When their batteries are low, some phones start randomly dialing numbers, eventually dialing 9-1-1. The call goes through without pressing the "send" button.

Low battery on cordless phones - If the handset is left off the base station charger for an extended period, the handset could dial 9-1-1. Cordless phones made within the past 2-3 years seem to have solved this problem.

4-1-1 and 6-1-1 - These numbers are universal, however sometimes people dial 9-1-1 when intending to dial 4-1-1 or 6-1-1.

9-1-1 Misdials and Hang-Up Calls - Many of these calls occur when callers misdial area codes similar to 9-1-1. Others result from misdialing the international access number 011. This is exacerbated by companies that require the number 9 to dial out. Some business and fax users dial 9 to get an outside line when their phone systems do not require doing so. If the caller

then dials a number starting with 1 and depresses 1 again by accident, the system dials 9-1-1. This can be avoided by changing the number to dial out to another number other than 9.

It is suspected that many misdials end up as hang-up calls once the callers realize their mistake. If a caller hangs up, dispatchers attempt callbacks and may dispatch officers to determine if a police or medical emergency exists. If you dial 9-1-1 by accident, remain on the line and advise the dispatcher of the mistake.

Intentional 9-1-1 Calls

Callers sometimes deliberately, however inappropriately dial 9-1-1. Such intentional calls fall under several distinct categories:

Non-emergency 9-1-1 Calls – Non-emergency calls often constitute a large portion of all 9-1-1 calls. People sometimes dial 9-1-1 for the wrong reason. They dial 9-1-1 for a non-emergency situation and believe it's the proper number to call. Callers sometimes phone about an incident that requires police attention, however it's not an emergency situation (i.e. the caller's car was broken into the previous night, graffiti occurred over the weekend, person loitering in front of a business, etc.)

Others call 9-1-1 to ask about non-police related matters (i.e. directions, address to the court house, phone number to another agency, etc.) Because wireless carriers do not charge for 9-1-1 calls, cell phone users sometimes call 9-1-1 and ask the dispatcher to transfer their call to a non-police number to avoid paying for it.

Exaggerated Calls - Sometimes 9-1-1 callers intentionally exaggerate the seriousness of an emergency to obtain a quicker police response. A caller may falsely report someone

has a weapon, when in fact no weapon was seen.

Prank 9-1-1 Calls - People sometimes call 9-1-1 to falsely claim an emergency or to deliberately hang up. Prank, abusive or malicious callers have the intent and purpose to annoy, harass or otherwise disrupt the 9-1-1 system.

Children playing with the phone

– The child intends to dial 9-1-1, however aren't aware of the problems it can create. Very young children playing with the telephone don't realize they are generating a 9-1-1 call. They are just playing with the buttons. These calls generally come from private homes or pay phones, particularly pay phones that are easily accessible to teens and children (i.e. malls, bowling alleys, schools, etc.)

Penalties for misuse of 9-1-1

According to Section 653y of the California Penal Code, any person who knowingly allows the use or who uses the 9-1-1 telephone system for any reason other than because of an emergency is guilty of an infraction, punishable as follows:

- For a first violation, a written warning shall be issued to the violator by the public safety entity originally receiving the call describing the punishment for subsequent violations.
- For a second or subsequent violation, a citation may be issued by the public safety entity originally receiving the call. The fine increases with each subsequent offense.

The parent or legal guardian having custody and control of an unemancipated minor who violates this section shall be jointly and severally liable with the minor for

the fine imposed pursuant to this section.

For purposes of this section, "emergency" means any condition in which emergency services will result in the saving of a life, a reduction in the destruction of property, quicker apprehension of criminals, or assistance with potentially life-threatening medical problems, a fire, a need for rescue, an imminent potential crime, or a similar situation in which immediate assistance is required.

Misuse and abuse of 9-1-1 calls places a burden on the 9-1-1 system. By the proper use of 9-1-1 for actual police, fire, or medical emergencies, response times are optimized for true emergency calls.



AlertOC is a public mass notification system designed to disseminate early warnings and time sensitive information to city businesses and residents via their landline telephones, email and mobile phones during times of emergency incidents. The system is designed to be utilized in conjunction with other public warning systems such as emergency alerts, sirens, etc.

On Thursday, June 25, 2009, at 6PM, the City of Westminster launched a test of the newly implemented mass notification system called AlertOC. Residents received a 55 second message from Mayor Margie Rice informing them of the test of the system. It was an extremely successful test! We had 18,197 successful message deliveries out of the 23,905 telephone numbers uploaded into the system. For more information or to register your mobile phone, email address or to request the

message in a different language, please visit the AlertOC website, www.alertoc.com.

SUMMER CONCERTS IN THE PARK

On Thursday nights this summer, the Civic Center Sunken Gardens is the place to be. The community can enjoy a variety of free concerts held from 6:00PM – 7:30PM, weekly. Join us and be entertained by swing, classical, rock-n-roll, country, and Westminster's own Nicholson Pipes & Drums. Bring a picnic dinner or enjoy the delicious food available through onsite nonprofit groups.

2009 Schedule

July 2

Stardust Sounds

Big Band

July 9

**Danny Dean & the
Homewreckers**

Rockabilly

July 16

Nicholson Pipes & Drums

*Bagpipe Band with the Celtic Skye
Dancers*

July 23

The Answer

Classic Rock & Roll

July 30

The Mids

Rock & Blues

August 6

Gospel Night

Community Group Choir

August 13

Stone Soul

60's Soul & Motown

August 20

Doo Wah Riders

Country

August 27
Westminster Chorus
Barbershop

Safety Day

Public Awareness Safety Day is
July 22nd at Sigler Park from
11:00AM to 1:00PM.
Mark your calendar!

CONSIDER A CAREER AS A POLICE DISPATCHER

*This is not your regular desk job. There is
something different every day.*

**SALARY \$3,771 - \$5,307 per
month plus a generous benefits
package**

Position Open Until Filled

Imagine starting your day as a Police Dispatcher with the Westminster Police Department. You come in at 6:30 p.m. to start your shift and sit at the dispatch console. Your first call is a traffic accident with injuries. The next call is an upset homeowner reporting her house broken into while she was away. Another caller is despondent over the break-up of his marriage and contemplating suicide. You then receive a call from a frantic liquor store clerk reporting he was just robbed at gunpoint and shots were fired inside the store. A responding officer locates the suspect vehicle and goes into pursuit. During all of this activity the phones keep ringing while officers are making car stops, running license plates, warrant checks, and requesting paramedics and tow trucks. Teamwork and the ability to multi-task are vital to effectively handling this fast paced career. Besides, how often do you get a chance to tell a cop where to go?

The Communications Division handles over 160,000 telephone

calls per year and 35,000 emergency 9-1-1 calls per year. Dispatchers answer and prioritize 9-1-1 calls, emergency and business lines; monitor numerous police radio channels and dispatch officers and equipment as required. Dispatchers are an integral part of police patrol operations. They are the primary link between the public and officers in the field. Making quick, accurate and sound decisions is crucial. The ability to learn new material and recall this information rapidly is extremely important.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- React quickly, efficiently, and calmly in emergency situations.
- Ability to speak and write in a clear and concise manner.
- Accurate listening and comprehension skills.
- Multi-task oriented.
- Elicit information from persons in varied states of mind.
- Excellent customer service skills.
- Motivated and detail oriented, with a strong work ethic.
- Learn and utilize police codes, city geography, and common landmarks.
- Demonstrated computer skills.
- Ability to work a flexible work schedule.

The Communications Center is a 24-hour, 7-day a week operation, **requiring shift work, weekends, and holidays on a rotational basis.** Shift assignments and vacations are based on seniority. Dispatchers work a 3/12 work schedule.

See the City of Westminster website to download an application and supplemental questionnaire at www.ci.westminster.ca.us.

WESTMINSTER PD IS NOW ON:

