



HEADS UP

A Palo Alto Community Newsletter



Vol. 04 No. 02

SEPTEMBER 2009



Welcome to the **HEADS UP** newsletter, a collaborative resource from police, fire prevention and disaster

preparedness and response. This newsletter reflects community-based issues. Articles for submission are welcome. **HEADS UP** is a newsletter, available through e-mail distribution and online at: www.papd.org

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BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY

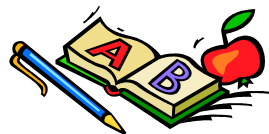
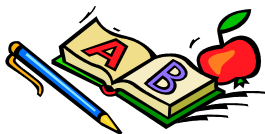
No matter what your commute choice may be, remember to share the road safely.

Parents – Help your student learn how to use our streets safely.

- Help your child choose the best walking or cycling route – it may not be the same way you would drive in a car!
- Children who regularly practice safe walking and biking with their parents are more likely to make safer choices as teenagers.

BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS

- **Be Predictable.** This means following the same rules of the road as car drivers do when riding your bike. Avoid crashes as well as traffic tickets by obeying ALL stop signs, traffic signals and other traffic laws.
- **Ride on the right, moving in the same direction as traffic.** Wrong way riding is extremely dangerous. If there is no bike lane, ride as far to the right as practical. Stay visible to traffic by not weaving in and out of parked cars.
- **Wear your helmet and buckle it every time** – it's the law. To best protect your brain, your helmet must fit properly: snug and level on your head, just above your eyebrows.
- **Make eye contact with drivers** – especially at intersections and driveways. Don't assume that drivers see you! Watch for right-turning cars by checking over your left shoulder.
- **Be alert and visible.** Watch out for doors being opened from parked cars, cars turning left or right and cars coming out of driveways. Avoid riding on sidewalks – you are most visible in the roadway with other vehicles.



- **You always have the option of getting off your bike and becoming a pedestrian.** Consider this if the intersection is especially crowded. Move out of the stream of traffic, get off your bike and walk it in the pedestrian crosswalk.
- **Obey adult crossing guards or the safety patrol.** They are there to help you cross congested intersections safely.
- **Do NOT carry things in your hands.** You should secure anything you need to carry on your bike rack or basket. Keep your backpack snug, not dangling low on your back.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS

- **Be Alert.** Look for cars coming from all directions before entering the street – including behind you.
- **Don't assume drivers see you!** Make eye contact – especially at intersections and driveways.
- **Be predictable.** Do not make sudden moves that place you in the path of oncoming vehicle traffic. Wait until it's your turn at traffic signals.
- **Cross at corners.** This is where drivers expect to see you. Crossing mid-block is hazardous as well as being illegal near traffic signals.
- **At intersections with traffic signals, start crossing with the white WALK symbol only.** Do not start to cross once the red flashing hand appears – wait for the next light cycle.



DRIVER SAFETY TIPS

- **Always observe the 25 mph maximum speed in school zones.**
- **Obey “No Right Turn on Red” signs where posted at school intersections.** This allows children to cross safely without cars turning through the crosswalk.
- **Set a good safety example by following instructions of crossing guards. Also:**
 - Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
 - Avoid making U-turns and other unsafe maneuvers.

- Don't double park. Avoid blocking red curbs or disabled access ramps.
- Make sure your child gets out of your car on the curb side, not near traffic.
- Use booster seats to make adult seat belts safe for children younger than 8 years old or under 4'9" tall.
- **Be aware of school commute routes.** Children walking or biking to school help reduce traffic congestion – give them a brake and use extra caution. Young children think that cars can stop instantly, and may not be able to judge speed or distance of vehicles moving towards them.
- **Try to carpool whenever possible to help reduce the congestion around the school.**
- **Don't rush** – leave home a few minutes earlier instead!



Report ALL crashes involving students to the PAPD at 329-2413 even if there are no injuries. Also, contact your school office to fill out the PAUSD incident report form.

For safe routes to school information, see the PTA Council Traffic Safety website: <http://saferoutes.paloaltopta.org>

If you have any particular traffic questions or concerns, please contact Sgt. Robert Bonilla at (650) 329-2683.

BICYCLE LICENSES & REGISTRATION

On August 21 and 24, 300 bicycles were licensed and registered with the Palo Alto Police Department. Gunn High School, Terman and Jordan Middle Schools organized volunteer parents and students to assist with the licensing efforts. It's a free service. If you missed it, you can have your bike licensed at any of the Palo Alto Fire Stations, between 4 – 5pm. You must take your bike in order to get it licensed.

WHY?

- 1) Required by Municipal Code (MC 10.64.010). If you ride a bike in Palo Alto,

- you must register it with the police department.
- 2) The bike-rider is never without identification.
 - 3) If your bike is stolen, the serial number and description are in the police database to alert all California law enforcement.
 - 4) If found, we are able to contact you.

Report all stolen bikes [online](http://www.papd.org) at www.papd.org or call 650-329-2406 during business hours.

“MEET THE CHIEF” MEETINGS

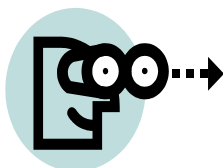
Monthly meetings have been scheduled throughout Palo Alto as part of an outreach plan to foster better communications and relationships between the Police Department and the extended community. It is an opportunity to meet the Interim Police Chief, Dennis Burns, to hear what the Police Department is doing, what’s been going on in the community and an open session for questions and answers. The general public is welcome to attend.

UPCOMING MEETING:

- **September 29, Tuesday, 7:00 pm, Channing House, 850 Webster St. Palo Alto. The public is welcome!**

SAFETY FOR SENIORS

Crime prevention is everyone’s responsibility, not just a job for law enforcement.



Seniors can learn how to protect themselves from crime by following these simple, common-sense suggestions. Share these tips with your neighbors and friends, too, and make it tough for criminals to target you while you are out.

“Protect Yourself”

1. Don’t assume you are safe because it is daylight. Crime occurs just as often during the day as during the night.
2. Consider carrying a cell phone for emergencies.
3. Criminals look for victims who they think will be easy targets and will be surprised – so walk confidently.

4. If someone makes you uneasy, trust your instincts and leave.
5. Be aware of your surroundings! Constantly look to your left, to your right and behind you - to see if anyone is following you.
6. Do not carry identification with your name and address on your key ring. If your keys are stolen, the thief has your address along with your keys.
7. Don’t carry large sums of cash or unused credit cards.

“Purse Snatchings”

1. Don’t fight with a purse snatcher! Let go of your purse. Your safety is more important.
2. If carrying a wallet, don’t carry it in your back pocket. Keep it in the front pocket or inside pocket.
3. Don’t dangle a purse so a thief can run by and grab it! If wearing a coat, carry your purse over your shoulder and under your coat.
4. Don’t leave your purse unattended in a shopping cart.
5. Beware of cars driving past you slowly. Purses are often snatched by criminals in moving cars.

“Protect Yourself on the Street”

1. Dress so you can walk or run easily to avoid an attack.
2. Avoid wearing flashy jewelry
3. Carry only what you need

“Stay Alert”

1. WALK WITH CONFIDENCE. Hold your head up and make eye contact (you don’t have to stare someone down, just let them know they have been seen).
2. Go to a PUBLIC PLACE to ask directions.
3. CHANGE DIRECTIONS (if you are being followed, this is a certain way to find out)
4. EYE CONTACT. Look at the person. It lets them know you are aware of them and you won’t be taken by surprise.



“In Your Car”

1. Always keep your car doors locked, whether you are in or out of your car. Keep your gas tank full and your engine properly maintained to avoid breakdowns.

2. At stop signs and traffic lights, keep the car in gear.
3. Travel well-lit and busy streets. Plan your route.
4. Don't leave your purse on the seat beside you; put it on the floor, where it is more difficult for someone to grab it.
5. Avoid isolated areas when parking.
6. Lock bags and packages in the trunk. If interesting packages are out of sight, a thief will be less tempted to break in to steal them.
7. Look around your car as you approach it.
8. Have your keys ready when you approach your car.
9. When returning to your car, check the front and back seat before entering.
10. If someone is standing close to your car, turn around and go back inside or look behind you to see if they have left.
11. Never pick up hitchhikers.
12. If car trouble, raise the hood and put on the emergency flashers. Stay in the car. Ask anyone who stops to call the police or the nearest service station.

“Bus, Train or Subway”

Sit near the driver or the exit when riding. If a person or situation makes you nervous, get away.

Plan

- Trust your INSTINCTS. You know when something just doesn't seem right.
- Avoid Dangerous situations. Walking alone at night, parking your car in a dark parking lot. Use your BEST JUDGEMENT.

Conclusion

- Stay ALERT
- Take precautions at home, on the street or in the car.
- Work with the Police to prevent and solve crimes.
- DON'T TAKE CHANCES.

CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

NEXT CLASS: Sept. 30 – Nov. 18, 2009

Application Deadline Sept. 10, 2009

The Citizens Police Academy is offered twice a year, in the spring and again in the fall. Applicants must be a resident or work in Palo Alto or have a direct affiliation to Palo Alto. Other interested individuals will be listed on a first-come-first serve basis if space is available.

During the 8 weeks, students learn about our police organization and what it takes to become a police officer for Palo Alto. Some of the classes are: Laws of Arrest, Search and Seizure, Investigations, Officer Safety, Use of Deadly Force and will practice on a firearms simulator. Ride-Alongs are optional.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis and can be found in the police lobby or online to download.

[**City of Palo Alto Website - Citizens Police Academy**](#)

Contact Information:

Susie Ord, Susie.Ord@citofpaloalto.org
650-329-2632

Citizens Police Academy, Class #23

15 people graduated from the spring session,



March – April 2009. Alumni become well-informed citizens who possess greater insight into police practices and services.

Since the first class was offered in 1995, over 336 people have graduated. It's a unique opportunity to learn about the duties, responsibilities and sometimes split second decisions faced by police officers as well as many myths and misconceptions.

[DID YOU KNOW????](#)

1. You can find out what **crimes** are happening in your neighborhood by going to: www.CrimeReports.com You can have information sent to your email address.
2. Police Information, **Anonymous Tip Line**- 329-2190. Provide information with confidentiality.
3. Police office/business hours Monday through Friday, open between 8 am and 4 pm, with alternating Fridays closed (closed September 4).
4. As a **Citizens Police Academy graduate**, you qualify to attend Advanced courses offered throughout the year. Classes such as: S.W.A.T., K-9 Unit, Sexual Assault Investigations, Financial Crimes/Fraud, Domestic Violence, Criminal Profiling, Sexual Offenders, Evidence Collections and more. Contact Susie Ord for information: 650-329-2632 or Susie.Ord@cityofpaloalto.org. If you aren't receiving emails, we may need to update our contact information for you.
5. **PAPD E-Mail Distribution List** – If you wish to receive the **HEADS UP** Newsletter, crime prevention bulletins, announcements and select crime alerts, send an email to Susie Ord – Susie.ord@cityofpaloalto.org. In the subject Line: “*Add me to the Email Distribution List*”. Include your name, and address in your message.

[INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY OF PALO ALTO'S LEAF BLOWER ORDINANCE](#)

On June 13, 2005, the Palo Alto City Council passed a leaf blower ordinance, P.A.M.C. 9.10.060(f).

The use of gas-powered leaf blowers is not allowed in any residential zones by anyone – including residents.

Residential zones are determined and defined in the Municipal Code.



The only leaf blower allowed in residential zones is the electric blower (noise level should not exceed 65 db measured from 25 feet).

The fine for using a gas-powered leaf blower in a residential area, or not following the established times and days, is \$100.00.

An individual may use an electrical blower only during the following hours:

Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sundays and Holidays not allowed

Non-residential zones: Electric and gas-powered blowers may be used only during the following hours:

Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sundays and Holidays not allowed

Violations can be reported via:
Leaf Blower Violations Hot Line 650/329-2210
or, onlinereporting@cityofpaloalto.org –
oscar.vilorio@cityofpaloalto.org.

For more information and view of the Leaf-Blower Ordinance and Frequently Asked Questions, please visit: www.cityofpaloalto.org

[CRIMES OF OPPORTUNITY](#)

AUTO BURGLARIES

Parked vehicles locked but with valuables in sight are being targeted by criminals. Valuables such as laptops, GPS, wallets, cameras, bags and other items are being taken from vehicles.

Criminals can easily walk by any parked vehicle and look inside. A thief sees the targeted item, breaks the glass and removes your property. It only takes a few seconds.

Many thieves take advantage of parking lots which offer them a higher number of vehicles in a concentrated area.

Prevention Tip

Whether in your driveway, on the street or in a parking lot, put all valuables in the trunk or take them with you. If items are out of sight, they are no longer a target.

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

The majority of crimes occur because of the *opportunity* to commit them. Your home contains many valuable items. If a garage door or a window is left open, the home becomes a vulnerable target. Most thieves see it as an opportunity to take your property.

Psychological – Easy target makes it a temptation to some. Remove the temptation by making it difficult to commit a crime.

Harden the Target at home. Criminal minded people can easily go into your neighborhood looking for an easy “opportunity” to commit a crime. Don’t make it easy.

- Lock all windows and doors
- Lock your vehicles and remove valuables from sight
- Keep garage doors closed
- Store and lock bikes
- Lock your gate to the side/back yard
- Have motion sensor perimeter lights

Recent comments made from burglaries and thefts; you may find some of these of value in what you might want to do differently.

- I parked my car in the driveway. Didn’t lock it because it was close to my front door.
- I left the front door to my house open while I was working in the back yard. It was a hot day.
- I left my windows open. It was a hot day.
- I left my front door unlocked since I was only gone a short time.
- I don’t lock my back sliding glass door because it’s broken.
- We always leave our bikes on the porch.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT SUMMARY

Eleven Block Parties registered to participate on August 4th giving a total of over 850 people having a get together with neighbors. It was encouraged for neighborhoods to use it as a

time to recognize the importance of crime prevention, getting to know your neighbors and heighten awareness at every level.



Neighborhood gatherings were held in three City parks, at private homes, and in the streets, closed to through traffic.



Residents learned about the valuable programs and services from the City staff. Staff got to meet and chat with residents and hear their interests or concerns.

Over 50 City of Palo Alto staff from Community Services, Library, Public Works, Utilities, Police and the City Manager’s Office visited neighborhood block parties, many of the City Staff got an unusual “Ride-along” in police cars. Fire engines visited from each station parties in their district.



The Friends of the Palo Alto Parks supported National Night Out and plans to be more involved next year. Many streets within a neighborhood can utilize a nearby park to host a National Night Out party. This year NNO block parties were held at Hoover Park, Cameron Park and Robles Park. Some streets are not designed for closure. What a perfect reason to meet at a neighborhood park on a warm summer evening. That’s what Neighborhood Watch is all about.

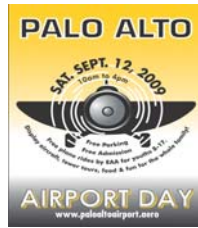


We invite you to submit your ideas for next year’s NNO. *How can we utilize our City Parks for NNO?*



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **September 4** - Police Station Closed
- **September 7** – Labor Day
- **September 12** – Palo Alto Airport Day, 10am – 4pm
- **September 18** – Police Station Closed
- **September 26** – 75th Anniversary – Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo, Birthday Party 10am – 5pm.
- **September 29, 2009** – Meet the Chief, Channing House - Open to the public
- **September 30 – Nov. 18** – Citizens Police Academy, Class #24 – Accepting applications until Sept. 10



We are here to provide you with safety education, prevention techniques and the information to prepare for a disaster. If you have a topic of interest for a future issue of **HEADS UP** or if you have a story to share, please contact Susie Ord.

Susie Ord. (650) 329-2632
Susie.Ord@cityofpaloalto.org
Program Coordinator, PAPD

Barbara Cimino (650) 617-3197
Barbara.Cimino@cityofpaloalto.org
Emergency Manager PAFD (OES)

Gordon Simpkinson (650) 329-2347
Gordon.Simpkinson@cityofpaloalto.org
Acting Fire Marshall, PAPD

EMERGENCY INFORMATION CITY OF PALO ALTO

www.cityofpaloalto.org/info
www.paneighborhoods.org/EP

Update on Flood Information and Citywide
Emergencies: 329-2420
City Office of Emergency Services (OES):
617-3197

EMERGENCY: 9-1-1 or
Cell Ph. Emergency: 470-1258

Police & Fire:

During Regular Hours of Business:

PA Police Dept: 329-2406

PA Fire Dept: 329-2184

City Utility Assistance, Non-Emergency:

Utilities – Electrical: 496-6914

Utilities – Gas Leaks: 329-2579

After Hours, Non-Emergency

City Assistance:

Communications Center/Dispatch: 329-
2413 (Available 24/7)

NEWS: KZSU – 90.1 FM (Local Only) or
KCBS 7.40 AM

