



IF CRIME OCCURS, REPORT IT

It is everyone's responsibility to report crime.

Many criminals target favorite areas and have predictable methods of operation. When you report all the facts about a crime, it helps the police assign officers in the places where crimes are occurring or where they are most likely to occur.

In many cases, it is the information provide by victims and witnesses that leads to the arrest of a criminal. So tell law enforcement as much as you can; no fact is too trivial. They need the eyes and ears of all citizens.

KEEP THESE NUMBERS HANDY:

EMERGENCY 9-1-1

Cell Phone Emergency
9-1-1 (City of Palo Alto)

Non-emergency (24 hrs)
650.329.2413

Police Front Desk/
General Information
650.329.2406
M-F 8am – 5pm

Solicitor Permits, Block Parties:
329.2147

Neighborhood Watch Program
650.329.2632



Be a Good Witness!

BE A GOOD WITNESS



*YOU ARE THE EYES & EARS
FOR THE POLICE*



Protect Your Neighborhood: Report Suspicious Activity

Palo Alto Police Department
275 Forest Ave. | Palo Alto, CA | 94301
650.329.2413 (non-emergencies)
pd@cityofpaloalto.org
www.papd.org

GOOD WITNESS CHECK LIST

If you are home or in the office and notice something that seems out of the ordinary – an unrecognizable van, strangers visiting your neighbor's house while they are on vacation – what should you do? **ANSWER: CALL THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO REPORT A SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY.**

Never place your personal safety or the safety of those around you in jeopardy to get a better description of a subject, but make a detailed mental picture of the suspects and the environment. Write down everything you see and hear as soon as possible, and then call 9 -1-1 or your local police.

Remember, you know your surroundings and neighborhood better than anyone else. Use your good judgment and common sense as a guide for when to report an incident. Don't wait until you become the victim -- always report suspicious activities immediately.

How to Be a Good Witness

So, how do you become a good citizen and what type of information is helpful to the police? First, call 9-1-1 or your local non-emergency telephone number (**650.329.2413 for Palo Alto**). Once you reach a dispatcher, give the dispatcher your location as accurately as possible and describe the suspicious activity.

Make it a habit to carry a pen and paper with you to write things down as they happen or immediately thereafter. The longer you wait to write down information, the more you will forget. Do not guess.

The more descriptive you are, the better opportunity for the police to apprehend the crooks. Here is a list of descriptors that help police find crooks. Commit them to memory for when the time comes to be a good witness.

Your Location:

- Give the dispatcher your exact location.
- Allow the dispatcher to ask questions.
- Do not hang up until directed by the dispatcher.

The Environment:

- What is the suspicious activity?
- Where did it occur?
- When did it occur?

Suspect:

- Gender
- Approximate age
- Race
- Height and weight
- Skin tone
- Clothing description (hat, coat, shirt, etc)
- Hair color and style (including facial hair)
- Eye color and shape, glasses
- Tattoos, scars, birthmarks
- Weapons (gun, knife, stick, walking cane)
- Direction suspect fled to and how?
- Suspect's identity (if you happen to know that person)
- Other distinguishing features

Vehicle:

- Remember the acronym "CYMBALS"
 - C = Color of car
 - Y = Year
 - M = Make (Ford, BMW, Honda)
 - B = Body
 - A = Additional descriptive features
 - L = License plate number
 - S = State
- How many occupants?
- Last direction of travel

When you call our dispatch center, please stay on the line for as long as you are needed.

What is Suspicious Activity?

Suspicious Activity is anything that is out of the ordinary. If any situation in your neighborhood makes you feel uncomfortable, then that is the time for you to call the police and give them the heads up. You may be the critical link in preventing a crime or in the apprehension of a criminal.

You should use your own judgment on determining what abnormal behavior in your neighborhood is. Examples of suspicious activities include, but not limited to:

- Someone entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied.
- Someone who knocks on your neighbor's front door and -- when no one answers -- walks to the rear of the residence.
- Someone who appears to be moving household items when no one is at home or when you know the neighbor isn't moving.
- A slow-moving vehicle with unidentified occupants, driving especially without lights, following an aimless or repetitive course.
- An unfamiliar car left running and/or parked on your street.
- Someone screaming or any noise that you cannot explain (such as gun shots, alarms or windows being broken).
- A child resisting the advances of an adult.
- Excessive traffic to and from a residence, especially during unusual hours.

The fight against crime begins with YOU! Make our communities safer by getting involved. If you see or hear something suspicious call 9-1-1