A Crime Prevention Program of The Springfield Township Police
Neighborhood Watch Committee

- Sgt. Rebecca Mersky-Chairperson
- Ofc. Samuel Boone
- Ofc. Joseph DiSantis
- Ofc. R. Calvin Wiley
- Ofc. Edward Gross
Agenda

▶ What is a suspicious person?
▶ What is a suspicious vehicle?
▶ Other unusual situations
▶ When to call 9-1-1
▶ What to expect when you call 9-1-1
▶ Things to do when you call 9-1-1
▶ Safety Tips
▶ Q & A
What is a SUSPICIOUS PERSON?

Is it how someone looks or is it how someone behaves?
What is a suspicious person?

- PEOPLE AREN’T SUSPICIOUS, BEHAVIOR IS!
- Unfamiliar
- Loitering

Suspicion is a gut feeling that something is wrong. If it feels wrong, it is probably wrong.

Someone acting suspicious does not, by definition, make them a criminal. Let us check.
How do I identify a person as suspicious?

- **People Running**
  - Are they in a hurry or do they have a heightened sense of urgency or tension.
  - Are they looking about furtively, as if being observed or pursued.
  - How are they dressed (legitimate jogging or fleeing the scene of a crime).

- **Carrying Property (Running or Walking)**
  - Unusual hour or location.
  - Concealing items under clothing.
How do I identify a person as suspicious?

- Someone waiting in front of a house, particularly if owners are absent.
- Loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood.
- A child resisting the advances of an adult.
- Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms may be under the influence.
- Posing as utility personnel without uniforms or proper ID.
Canvassing and Soliciting in Springfield

- Must Register with Police Department
  - Must have ID issued by Springfield Police.
  - Must produce ID upon request.
- No Soliciting after 9:00 PM
- Current approved solicitors are listed with the police department
What is a suspicious vehicle?

Is it how the vehicle looks or is it what the vehicle is / is not doing?
What is a suspicious vehicle?

- Seeing the same vehicle “cruising” the area for an unknown purpose.
- Moving slowly and/or driving without lights on.
- Leaving the area at a high rate of speed.
- Vehicle parked in a remote area.
- Apparent business transactions conducted from vehicle, especially around parks or schools and if juveniles are involved.
What is a suspicious vehicle?

- **Property in Vehicle**
  - TVs, Laptops, Pillow Cases, or items not commonly seen in a car in that circumstance.

- **Unusual Activity Involving Vehicle**
  - Forcible entry of a locked vehicle (Broken Glass).
  - Trying numerous door handles or walking between cars with no purpose or defined direction.
    - Fitness clubs, day cares, parks
  - One or more persons sitting in a parked car closely scanning the area. Are they lookouts or casing the area?
When ski masks and panel vans get together there are never good intentions involved.
Other Unusual Situations

- A person switching vehicles in a public place, could be “dumping” a stolen vehicle or one that was used in a crime.
- Continuous “repair” operations at a non-business location.
- Open or broken doors or windows at a closed business or residence.
- Unusual noises such as barking dog, screaming, sounds of a struggle or gunshots.
Your observations and calling 9-1-1

Talking Points:

- Your safety comes first!!
- Don’t hesitate to call 9-1-1. Trust your instincts!
- Write it down.
- When to call 9-1-1.
- What to expect when you call 9-1-1.
- What the caller should do when calling 9-1-1.
YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST!!!!

- Observe and Report.
- Do not confront. That’s for the police to do.
- Always be in a safe place when calling 9-1-1
When to call 9-1-1

- Any life threatening situation
  - Medical Emergency - Fire
- Serious crime in progress
  - Robbery, burglary, assault
- OR - Anytime a police response is needed (including quality of life issues)
- You Are Not Bothering Us when you call 9-1-1
Write it Down

- Write down anything you can remember. (Do not rely on your memory)
- Be as precise as you can and avoid guessing.
  - Incorrect information is worse than no information!
- Trust your instincts. Don’t hesitate to call if you think something is wrong.
- Do not worry about being embarrassed, even if your suspicions turn out to be unfounded, think of what could happen if you don’t act.
WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU CALL

- Nature of the emergency - what is going on now, description of subject or vehicle, any weapons involved, how long ago did the incident occur.

- Location - need exact address, location, place, name, intersection.

- Your name and phone number

- Are you available to speak to the police?
  - If not immediately available, provide a way to contact you later.
What should you (the caller) do?

- Remain calm and speak clearly.
- Be prepared to answer who, what when, where, and how.
- Let the call taker ask the questions.
- Answer as well as you can.
- Don’t make guesses!
- Report what you have observed.
WHAT SHOULD YOU (THE CALLER) DO?

▶ Stay on the phone if it is safe to do so or until the call taker advises you to hang up.

▶ INADVERTENTLY DIALED 9-1-1?
  ▶ Do not hang up.
  ▶ Advise call taker it was a mistake.
Some 9-1-1 Issues

- Not all cell phones will give location.
- Cell phone used near the border of other communities may connect you to that community and not Montgomery County.
- Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) - in some cases the location of the caller cannot always be determined.
Safety Tips for Joggers & Dog Walkers

▶ Be alert of your surroundings while exercising or walking your dog.
▶ Carry a cell phone to report concerns.
▶ Carry a notepad or pen to jot down information.
▶ Consider a reflective collar for your dog and a safety vest for yourself.

Remember... Observe and Report ... DO NOT CONFRONT!
QUESTIONS?