

Bethesda Police/ECA Community Crime and Safety Meeting – March 18, 2019, 7:00 PM

Office Dana Stroman, Montgomery County Police District 2 Community Services Officer met with several Edgemoor area residents to discuss neighborhood security and crime.

Winter 2018 Car and Yard Vandalism

Police have been unable to identify a suspect. Vandalism appears to be random. Based on the timing of the events (in this and other neighborhoods), they think it is possible it was one or more college students who were home on winter break. Random vandalism like this is not common and this was an odd series of incidents.

Edgemoor Area Crime Statistics and Trends

The Bethesda area (2nd District) has the lowest crime rate in the county. The primary crimes are thefts from vehicles and residential burglaries. Although these tend to come in waves and vary by season (higher October to January and in the summer), there has been no overall increase in these crimes in recent years.

Recommendations for Residents to Deter Crime, and Help Catch Criminals

Residents can help reduce their susceptibility to these crimes by:

- Always locking all the doors in your home and car;
- Using and leaving on exterior night-time lights;
- Being aware and vigilant; and
- Sharing information with neighbors and keeping an eye on each other's property.

See the Montgomery County Police website for additional crime-prevention brochures and information (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/resource/CrimePreventBrochures.html>).

Other Safety and Security Suggestions

If you have a security camera, you should have one that provides good quality video. The police do not recommend any particular camera or brand, but you can find helpful reviews online.

Dogs can be helpful for scaring away criminals or alerting you to suspicious activity.

Immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity to the police, even if there is no indication of a crime being committed. Don't be afraid to call. Especially report activity at night. Call the non-emergency police number (301-279-8000) and put the number in your contact list. When in doubt, make the call. Don't delay.

County Police use the “Nextdoor” neighborhood social network to communicate with citizens about police-related matters (www.nextdoor.com) and if you are on that network, you can learn more about crime in the area, emergencies, and recommendations, as well as keeping up with the neighborhood.

The “Neighbors” phone app is widely used by citizens who own security cameras and want to share information and videos with others. Although the app was developed by Nest (the company that makes video doorbells) it can be used by anyone with any brand of security camera.

If you are out of the area, and are alerted to suspicious activity at your home (e.g., by a security camera or a neighbor), do not call 911 because the call will go to local police where you are. Call the Montgomery County Police non-emergency number (301-279-8000).

Mail Theft

Montgomery County Police don’t handle mail theft or other mail-related crimes, so they have no information about any mail theft incidents. The Postal Inspector handles those.