

▶ April 2011

Block Watcher

“April has put a spirit of youth in everything.”
~ William Shakespeare



In this issue:

- Fun With the Fuzz
- FTC and Identity Fraud
- Safety
- Bellingham Municipal Codes
- Emergency Preparedness

Officer Katrin Dearborn

Crime Prevention

Bellingham Police

505 Grand Ave.

360-778-8660

Please email me with comments or questions at:

kdearborn@cob.org

Fun With the Fuzz– April 23, 2011

It's not too late to register for Fun With the Fuzz!. Have fun, get some exercise and give to a good cause. Fun With the Fuzz is a 5K road race where 100% of the proceeds go to the Behind the Badge Foundation. The Behind the Badge Foundation helps families of fallen officers in Washington State by offering financial planning, memorial planning, counseling and financial assistance to surviving families. They also maintain the law enforcement memorial.

The race starts from the Bellingham Police Station at 9am. Entry fee is \$20.00 and includes a T-shirt. 100% of the proceeds (yes that's 100%) will go to the Behind the Badge Foundation. Prizes will be awarded.

For more information on this race check out their website at www.funwiththefuzz5k.com. For more information about Behind the Badge check out their website at www.behindthebadgefoundation.org.

FTC and Identity Fraud

For the 11th consecutive year, identity theft was at the top of **the list of complaints** consumers submitted to the FTC. Of the more than 1.3 million complaints received by the agency in 2010, 19 percent were related to ID theft. A total of 11 percent of the complaints — nearly 145,000 — dealt with debt collection; some five percent dealt with internet services. For the first time, **imposter scams** — where fraudsters pose as friends, family, or government agents to trick people into sending them money — made the top 10. The new FTC report also includes complaint data by state, and data about the 50 metropolitan areas reporting the highest per capita incidence of complaints. If you would like to read this report it can be found on FTC's website or using the below link.

<http://ftc.gov/sentinel/reports/sentinel-annual-reports/sentinel-cy2010.pdf>

Did you know?

- You can look up crime statistics for your neighborhood by going to the Police Department's website at www.cob.org/police and clicking on the neighborhood crime statistic link on the right hand side?



Stay Safe While Outside!

Daylight Savings has ended and the days are getting longer. With this, people may be out walking, running and biking later in the evening and earlier in the morning. People tend to feel more safe with it being light out but it is important to remember that you may not be as visible as you think. Gray, cloudy weather and rain can make it difficult for driver's to see you while crossing the road. Basic reflective gear such as placing reflective tape on your clothing, wearing bright colored clothing such as reflective vests or wearing clip on blinking LED lights help a lot in making yourself visible.

Many people choose to listen to music while exercising. While I understand the temptation to do this keep in mind that this can be dangerous as well. Music can easily drown out the sounds of people or bicycles approaching you from behind. Vehicles approaching over a hill or through a turn can go unheard. Even trains have gone unnoticed by people with headphones on.

Bellingham Police respond to quite a few vehicle vs. pedestrian/bicycle accidents every year where the driver of the vehicle stated they were unable to see the biker, walker, runner etc due to low visibility. Don't assume the driver of the vehicle can see you and definitely don't assume they will have time to stop.

Taking a few extra minutes to make yourself visible could make the difference from a vehicle seeing you and an unfortunate accident.

Bellingham Municipal Code– So What Really Is The Law Anyway?

9.12.030 - Deposit Of Garbage And Refuse

A. Every owner, occupant or tenant of a single-family dwelling unit within the city shall deposit or cause to be deposited in a covered container all garbage and refuse of such a nature that it is perishable or may decompose or be scattered by wind or otherwise, which may accumulate on any premises owned or occupied by such owner, occupant, or tenant; except as provided in subsection B. Recyclable materials shall be picked up by the contractor, without charge, when set out in accordance with published directives to be issued by the Director of Public Works.

B. Vegetable wastes, ashes, leaves, grass, plant cuttings and other organic wastes may be composted on private premises or at a public place designated for composting, providing the compost site is maintained so as not to create odors, expose raw garbage, allow garbage to become scattered, or increase the risk from pests. Nonputrescible garbage and refuse, animal wastes, and materials containing animal or vegetable fats may not be composted. Composting in accord with this subsection shall not be a violation of Sections 9.04.040, 9.04.050 or Chapter 10.60 of the Bellingham Municipal Code.

Emergency Preparedness

When you are putting together your disaster kit don't forget to include copies of important documents in a waterproof container or a Ziploc bag. After a major disaster you may have insurance claims delayed or may have delays in filling prescriptions or being able to prove your identity without copies of these documents available.

Documents you may want to consider photocopying and placing in your kit are: Bank account information, insurance policies, family records such as birth certificates and marriage certificates, social security cards, immunization records, driver's licenses or passports, wills, credit card information, important phone numbers and prescription and doctor information.