



TARPON SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT



"Building a Better Future through Excellence in Policing"

December 2020

Crime Watch Newsletter

The Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) everyone is familiar that in order to report an emergency situation, you can dial 911 for help. However, the Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) system calls you at times when residents need to be informed of situations where life and property are concerned, to where a situation may create detours due to construction or a public event.

The Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) system is a mass communication tool used to notify citizens of critical situations, crime alerts, crime prevention information, and other information deemed to be in the interest of the citizens and property of Tarpon Springs. The Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) system is an internet browser computer system that uses a combination of an address database and GIS mapping technology.

The system can send out messages to a specific geographic area, or a specific list of streets, households, or individuals, with a common interest. In addition, the Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) System has the capability to leave a message on an answering machine. Even if an individual's telephone is busy at the time, the system can redial that number at predetermined intervals. Some of the situations where the Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) System can be used for are:

- * Missing or endangered children and elderly adults.
- * Evacuations or information concerning critical incidents.
- * Neighborhood Crime Watch information.
- * Street closures due to construction or public events.
- * Crime Alerts to a specific area or group.
- * Boil water notices.

The Alert Pinellas City of Tarpon Springs (Reverse 911) system also has a self-registration portal. This self-registration portal gives the public the opportunity to enter additional contact information to receive a notification. Examples would be cell phone numbers, work numbers, and business numbers. If a notification was to be issued in the area of your home and/or your business the notification would also be sent to any additional numbers you listed in the self-registration portal. Copy and Paste to get started: www.member.everbridge.net

Police

Putting the serve in "Serve and Protect!" Ofc. Hazime, Cpl Spatz and Ofc. Bird

The officers were contacted by a female, who had just arrived from out of state, leaving an abusive relationship, with two small children. The female explained that she had made arrangements to receive assistance upon her arrival in the area but was unable to obtain the necessary assistance; thus, she and her children had been staying in their vehicle. So, she was attempting to locate a shelter. Unfortunately, due to the COVID issue, there were restrictions on placement and availability of a shelter, as officers attempted to find her local placement.

It was determined that she had used her money to purchase food items for her children and did not have enough money for gas, lodging, or additional food. Thus, Ofc. Bird contacted a local business, who agreed to donate some snacks, but then felt moved to purchase additional food items, with his own money, for the family to be able to eat. Ofc. Hazime assisted by purchasing gas for their vehicle. Cpl. Spatz had advised the sergeant of the incident and stated that the officers were securing a hotel room for the family. Cpl. Spatz wanted to inform the sergeant of the actions of the other two officers to commend them for the empathy and compassion shown; however, Sgt. Crawford later learned that Cpl. Spatz had personally paid for the hotel room and had not taken any credit.

When the sergeant talked to them about the incident, the officers advised that it just felt like the right thing to do, as they had seen the situation she and her children were currently in and were moved to provide immediate assistance.



Stay Alert!!!!

PROPERTY CRIME YOU CAN HELP PREVENT IT



LOCK IT

Ensure your car doors and all doors to your residence are kept locked.



REMOVE IT

Removing valuables from your car is better than hiding them. This includes garage door openers and spare keys.



LIGHT IT

Leave exterior residence lights on at night or utilize motion detecting lights.



CLOSE IT

Keep your garage door closed and double-check it is closed at night.



HIDE IT

Keep valuables in your garage, car and home out of sight.



REPORT IT

Report all criminal and suspicious activity immediately.

Police-727-937-6151

**TARPON SPRINGS
POLICE DEPARTMENT**



NON-EMERGENCY
(727) 938-2849
WWW.TSPD.US

PORCH PIRATES CAN STEAL YOUR JOY

These criminals follow delivery trucks around and when they see an opportunity-they strike!

Take steps to protect your delivered packages.

1. Ensure you are home when delivery is scheduled
2. Have Packages delivered to a trusted neighbor at home
3. Have packages delivered at work
4. If available, use the store pickup



Safety tips to help ensure a positive holiday shopping experience:

- Be focused and alert to surroundings.
- Shop during daylight hours. If shopping at night, go with a friend or family member.
- It's important to not leave purses unattended in shopping carts.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Keep credit cards secure and remember to return them to your wallet safely after the transaction. Keep a copy of credit card numbers so it's convenient to report any missing cards immediately.

Place shopping packages out of sight in the vehicle's trunk and lock the doors. If going back to a store after placing items in-vehicle, move the vehicle to a new parking place.

Cops N Kids



Santa is coming to town and we need your help!

The Tarpon Springs Police Department's Annual Cops/kids Christmas Program is underway. The Police Department provides gifts to low income and at-risk children and families actively involved in the Tarpon Springs Cops/Kids Program.

The police department is asking for your help in making the wishes of these children come true. We are accepting new unwrapped gifts for children from the age of 2 through 13. We are also accepting cash donations in order to provide those special "Wish List" items.

Checks should be made payable to:

Tarpon Springs Police Department Cops/Kids Program



We will begin accepting Gift Donations on November 17th and continue through December 21st.

Cash or check donations can be made anytime. Donations may be dropped off at:

**Tarpon Springs Police Department
444 S. Huey Ave., Tarpon Springs, FL 34689
(any day, any time)**

If you have any questions please call us at (727) 938-2849

The Tarpon Springs Police Department Cops/Kids Program does not ask for donations by telephone solicitation and any calls like this may be fraudulent.



SCAMS

The year 2020 has been challenging at best, and the holiday season will be different for most people this year. While gift cards have continued to grow in popularity as a quick and easy purchase for gift giving, they may turn out to be the go-to gift of the 2020 holiday season as shoppers seek to minimize their exposure in public places.

But before you give (or receive) gift cards, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends that you follow these tips.

- **Inspect gift cards before you buy.** A gift card should have all its protective stickers in place. Report the card to the store if anything looks scratched off or damaged.
- **When you buy, save the receipt.** Keeping the gift card receipt can be helpful if you run into problems with the card.
- **Treat gift cards like cash.** Report a lost or stolen gift card to the card's issuer immediately. Most card issuers have toll-free numbers you can find online to report a lost or stolen card. Depending on the card issuer, you may even be able to get some money back.
- **Buy gift cards from sources you know and trust.** Think twice about buying gift cards from online auction sites, to avoid buying fake or stolen cards.
- **Read the gift card's terms and conditions.** Know the deal you're getting with gift cards. For example, are there fees every time it gets used – or if it sits unused?

SCAMS cont.

And here's the most important gift card tip of all:

- **Remember that gift cards are for gifts, not payments.** Gift cards are a scammer's favorite way to steal people's money. Anyone who demands that you pay them with a gift card, for any reason, is always a scammer. This includes calls from imposters claiming to be a family member with an emergency, calls from the IRS and Social Security, law enforcement, and utility companies. Simply put, never pay with a gift card.
- Report a suspected gift card scam directly to the card issuer, then report it to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at 1 800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) & local police department.



SEE SOMETHING / SAY SOMETHING

Fire Safety

Christmas Tree Safety



As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.



PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



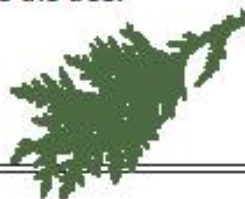
PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

FACTS

- ! More than **one of every four** home Christmas tree fires is caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes **one in every four** of the fires.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

**Tarpon Springs
Fire Rescue**



**IF YOU SEE
SOMETHING,
SAY
SOMETHING.**

**REPORT
SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY
TO THE POLICE**

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Tarpon Springs Police Department

444 South Huey Avenue

Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

Emergency #911

Administration # 727-938-2849

Non-Emergency Dispatch # 727-937-6151

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