

DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date April 2, 1962

To: Commissioner (Through Official Channels)

Subject: LIST OF SUGGESTIONS - CITIZEN COOPERATION IN REDUCING CRIME

Attached hereto is a list of suggestions where citizens can aid the police in reducing crime.

You will note that the suggestions are broken down into various categories of crime along with some general suggestions which might be of interest to the citizens of our community.

James C. Berg
JAMES C. BERG,
Deputy Superintendent

JCB:js
Attach.

APPROVED
APR 2 1962
James C. Berg
SUPERINTENDENT

CITIZEN COOPERATION IN REDUCING CRIME

There are four main areas in which the cooperative efforts of the citizen can bring about a major reduction in crime in our city--they are his home, place of business, personal property, and automobile. In fact, by strictly adhering to the following rules, he prevents the vast majority of crimes from occurring at all. Let's take the automobile first.

AUTOMOBILES

Rule: Never leave ignition open or doors unlocked. If every citizen cooperated fully, the result would be a 67% reduction in auto thefts. That is the number of cars recovered with the owner's keys still in the ignition switch or with no evidence of the doors being forced to gain entry.

Other measures which can prevent financial loss are:

1. Do not leave title or registration in car.
2. Notify police immediately from location of theft of car.
3. Sign complaints in auto theft cases.
4. Do not sign contracts or bills of sale in blank (RD-108 Form).
5. Notify the Auto Recovery Bureau of strange cars parked in neighborhood for extended periods of time.
6. Do not leave license plates on car when sold.
7. Claim cars promptly when notified of recovery.
8. Check for lien on title when purchasing used car from individuals. Be sure lien is properly discharged.
9. Never leave valuables in an unattended car.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The tragedy of a person suffering the loss of a large sum of money by pursesnatchers, store thieves, or through carelessness is well known to us all. Here again, a few simple precautions can avert such disasters.

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Suggestions to Public who Shop in Downtown and Neighborhood Shops

1. When shopping, women should hold onto their purses and carry them so they cannot be opened .
2. Do not leave packages or purse on counters while preoccupied with merchandise .
3. Notify clerks in store if you see anyone stealing articles.
4. Do not buy merchandise from strangers on street or at your home without checking credentials, as it might be stolen goods.
5. Be careful of your charge plates and credit cards. Loss or theft of same may result in merchandise being charged to your account. Notify store if lost or stolen.
6. Report to police any residential address where there is an unusual amount of activity, such as people carrying merchandise in and out--it could be a "fence" for stolen goods.

Recommended Precautions to Safeguard Against Pursesnatchings

1. Do not carry large sums of money in your handbag.
2. Avoid, whenever possible, any darkened side streets during your travels .
3. Beware of strangers at bus stops, or persons inquiring as to directions and locations.
4. Whenever possible avoid the habit of a strict routine schedule.
5. Avoid shortcuts through dark alleys and fields.
6. Be alert whenever out alone at night--watch out for persons following you or crossing the street in the middle of the block, loitering around intersections of streets and alleys, and in vestibules of apartment buildings.
7. Put an inconspicuous mark of identity on all sundry items which you carry in your purse .

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8. If possible, avoid carrying your charge plates, check book, jewelry or valuable papers in your purse.
9. When driving your car keep your doors locked at all times.
10. Examine the interior of your car for a concealed thief or robber before entering.
11. Avoid parking your car in dark, isolated areas.
12. Do not resist and do not wrap the strap of your handbag around your arm because many women are injured when resisting and attempting to hold onto their purses in this manner.
13. If possible try to observe the facial features of the thug for future identification.

Suggestions Regarding Larceny by Trick Crimes

Be assured that you are not going to get something for nothing, especially from a stranger. Be on your guard whenever a stranger approaches you with an offer to split "found money" with you merely by your showing him your money to "show your good faith". A confidence man relies on his victim's desire to get rich quick or get something for nothing. It's an old axiom in law enforcement that a person cannot be victimized by a "con game" unless he has some larceny in his heart.

If you are approached by a stranger with an offer of quick, easy money, pretend to go along with the scheme and then make an excuse to get away from him long enough to call the Special Investigation Bureau. They will advise you how to proceed from there.

HOMES

Home burglaries occur most often when families leave repeatedly at a certain hour and time of day. If you are committed to a visit regularly each week, try doubling back to your home ever so often. This makes your departure and return uncertain and discourages the would-be burglar. Other important rules are:

For SHORT Absences from home:

1. Leave a light or two burning--preferably second floor light or bathroom.

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2. Lock all doors and windows--many thieves will only enter a home which is not secured.
3. Don't leave garage doors open. An empty garage is an indication there is no one at home.
4. Don't leave notes on the door for friends indicating time of return.
5. Don't leave door keys under the door mat or in the mail box.

For LENGTHY Absences from Home:

1. Notify your precinct station to permit an occasional check. Be certain to notify them when you intend to return.
2. Lock all doors and windows and secure the milk chute doors.
3. Have a neighbor watch your home.
4. Don't allow papers or deliveries to accumulate.

Additional suggestions for aiding your Police Department are as follows:

1. Don't keep large amounts of money or valuables at home or rely on strongboxes and safes. All of them can be opened if the thief has enough time.
2. If a burglary is in progress, notify the police without alarming the thief if possible.
3. When a burglary is discovered, leave things as they are until the police arrive.
4. Notify police on all suspicious characters or cars. One of a dozen calls may cause the arrest of a criminal.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BUSINESSMEN

Protective Measures Against Burglaries

1. Leave nightlight, inside store and over rear or "alley" doors.
2. If a safe is used - keep light over safe visible from street.

3. Keep as little money as possible on premises--use bank night deposit facilities.
4. Keep a few secretly marked bills for positive identification. Serial numbers alone are not good evidence. When serial numbers are recorded for this purpose, the year of issue and the Federal Reserve District must also be recorded. Individual markings are generally the best evidence.
5. If it is necessary to keep large sums of money in your place of business, either invest in a "money chest" type of safe, or hire money transfer service from a company which will furnish such a safe.
6. If only records or books are kept in a safe, leave the safe closed but unlocked and post a sign on safe door, e.g. "This safe is unlocked--contains no money". The safe still provides fire protection and the sign should prevent damage to the safe and accompanying costly repairs.
7. Provide and properly maintain an efficient alarm system--bell type or silent.
8. Report suspicious person who may be "casing" the business place and try to obtain a car license number used by these persons.
9. Keep up-to-date records on employees (full and part time).
10. Avoid handling money in presence of employees, customers, or strangers.
11. Make thorough inspection of premises before closing.
12. If a Breaking & Entering does take place--notify the police immediately and protect the crime scene for possible evidence. Do not handle things which the thieves have handled.

Bad Checks

Just the other day a merchant complained about cashing a City of Detroit pay check which was found to have been stolen. The only demand he made of the passer was his signature on the back--no identification, address, or car license number. He could not be helped. Checks make up

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75% of our city's business. Cooperation is a must if this financial loss is to be curbed.

Here is what you as a businessman can do:

1. When cashing a check, know your endorser and have him endorse same in your presence.
 - a. Get passer's identification, car license number, operator's license number, address, telephone number, and, before cashing the check, see more than one item of identification.
2. If a bad check is received, call and report same to police immediately.
3. If your place of business is broken into, immediately determine if your check book has been stolen or if checks may have been removed from the middle of the book.
4. When going out of business, destroy your old check book by burning same.
5. Should you discover a bad check passer in your place of business, attempt to detain him and call police. Don't, however, put your safety in jeopardy, if he attempts to leave. Get an accurate description of his person and license number of his car if possible.
6. When accepting a personal check, accept check for the amount of purchase only and don't accept post-dated checks.

NARCOTICS

Narcotics are an ever present menace to our society. Citizens may cooperate by notifying the Narcotic Bureau when:

1. They suspect homes or apartments in their neighborhoods are being frequented by narcotic users.
2. A member of the family is starting to act in an unnatural way, such as dropping old friends, staying out late, staying away from work or school, losing interest in food and losing weight, money, clothing, or other paraphernalia in his room.

3. They notice strange or out of town cars periodically in the neighborhood and meeting with persons under strange circumstances .
4. They notice the odor of what appears to be burning leaves or heavy incense coming from rooms or apartments in their building.
5. They find any type of drug or narcotic paraphernalia any place .
6. In contacting the bureau, they attempt to have correct street addresses, car license numbers and names or physical descriptions of persons.

Persons should feel free to call the Narcotic Bureau anytime they desire to receive help in solving their own narcotic addition problem.

Citizens are assured that any information they give will be held strictly confidential .

GENERAL RULES

In general here are a few other rules which you as a citizen can follow to make our streets and our homes safe against crime .

1. The identity of any person reporting suspected criminal activity will be held strictly confidential
2. It is the duty of any citizen who witnesses the commission of a crime to volunteer that information to the police .
3. When any person suffers injury or loss, at the hands of another resulting from a crime, it is expected that the injured party will prosecute any complaint made to the police .
4. When reporting a crime to the police, be completely truthful and do not withhold information. Valuable time may be lost in investigating a complaint if this is not followed .
5. To aid in the recovery of lost or stolen property, record serial numbers of watches, cameras, guns, bonds, typewriters, etc. If your valuable, personal items do not have serial numbers, inscribe your initials somewhere on the item so it may be identified readily.

The Women's Division suggests a series of slides explaining laws pertaining to youth and explained to children in various schools by a policewoman.

Women's Division suggests that the department request cooperation from the Detroit newspapers and TV stations to publicize laws and ordinance pertaining to youth. This has been done in the past and the details could be worked out if it is so desired.

W.D. suggests that we develop in-service training films and tapes of speeches or discussions by qualified individuals.

The Youth Bureau has some recommendations as to how the parents, churches, unions, schools, and businessmen can assist the Police Department.

1. Schools should bring to the attention of the police incidents of misbehavior such as group activities, knifings, etc.
2. Better supervision of the immediate school area by school personnel before and after school.
3. Provision of classes for students who do not excel academically to learn skills.
4. Labor unions should provide apprenticeship classes in specific skills for young people under the age of 18.
5. Labor Unions should provide and supervise work programs.
6. Businessmen could provide more scholarships for deserving youth in the community.
7. Encouragement by businessmen of personal counseling service for young people for the purpose of informing them as to the requirements and problems of the vocations in which they might be interested and to evaluate their suitability.
8. Increase the scope of existing agencies to assist in the problem of handling the delinquent.

An examination of the statistics in recent police department reports reveals that investigation arrests probably still constitute between 20 and 25 percent of all arrests made in Detroit.

Consider, for example, the 11-month period from January through November 1961. Of a total of 85,588 arrests, 21,518 were in a category "dismissed by police, dismissed by writ, including investigation". In other words, 25 percent of all arrests resulted in no formal charge being made against the person arrested. It seems apparent from our analysis of previous years' figures and from earlier discussions with the police department that a large percentage of this 21,518 figure involves investigation arrests. No doubt some of these investigation arrests were made for probable cause. Unfortunately the available statistics have never permitted an exact count of the number of investigation arrests.

Contrasted with previous years, this appears to be a substantial improvement. In 1956, for instance, 45 percent of all arrests were for investigation. But changes in the method of reporting arrest figures suggest that such comparisons are of questionable validity. Thus, in 1956, the police reported 6,602 investigation arrests for prostitution and commercialized vice. Current police reports refer to these arrests under the heading "Detention - Board of Health". There were in the first 11 months of 1961 some 9,202 such arrests. If these are characterized as investigation arrests, the total referred to earlier as arrests resulting in no formal charge would be 30,720 or 36 percent of all arrests.