City of Hemet
POLICE

David M. Brown, Chief of Police

450 E. Latham Avenue – Hemet, California – 92543 – (951) 765-2400 – www.cityofhemet.org

FEBRUARY 2013

Quarterly Community Newsletter

Dear Neighborhood Watch Leaders, Block Captains, Homeowners Associations, Current Managers and Leaders of Service, Social, and Church groups:

This may be the **last paper copy** of the ***Hemet Police Department Quarterly Newsletter*** you will receive **via the U.S. Mail.** Why? It's all about the money. The City's budgets are shrinking and the resources are dwindling. Budgets are being gradually cut for everyone, including the Fire and Police Departments. The cost of mailing letters has also gone up again. As always, we are constantly evaluating avenues to save tax-payer dollars and we must prioritize. Although we feel very strongly that the information in these newsletters is important, we must be responsible with precious funds. **The newsletters will continue to be produced and available to you!** Please continue reading so you do not miss a single issue.

The Quarterly Newsletter was first established in the year 2002. The reason the letter was created was to keep you up-to-date on safety and security issues so you could protect yourself and inform your neighbors & friends. In the beginning, the Hemet Police Department applied for and received Community Development Block Grants. The Grants supplied the funds we needed to make copies and to mail the Quarterly Newsletters. The Block Grant does not exist anymore.

But wait – just because we will no longer be mailing a paper copy of the newsletter – you can still receive the information. All you have to do is see Page 2 and choose how you would like to receive it.

Sincerely,

Rosalie Moyer
Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

P.S. As you look at Page 2, you will see you are urged to contact Sergeant Nate Miller. Sgt. Miller provides the new delivery systems described on Page 2. He has found a way to deliver the Quarterly Newsletter to you safely & securely at virtually no cost. Thank you Sgt. Miller.

Would you like to help the environment, save money, and GO GREEN?

The Hemet Police Department offers it's ***Neighborhood Watch Quarterly Newsletter*** in several formats: Digital Download, Web-Based Viewing, E-Mail Delivery, and Local Pick-Up.

Subscribe for E-Mail Delivery:

Send an E-Mail to **nmiller@cityofhemet.org** with 'Subscribe to Newsletter' In the subject line.

Download and/or view Newsletter from our Web-Site:

Go to **www.hemetpolice.org** then click **Community Services** then **Quarterly Newsletter.**

Local Pick-Up:

Newsletters are available for pick-up at any of our local stations.

West Sub-Station	Main Station	East Sub-Station
3663 W. Florida Ave.	450 E. Latham Ave.	1985 E. Florida Ave.

Cancel Your Subscription:

Send an E-Mail to **nmiller@cityofhemet.org** with 'Cancel Newsletter' in the Subject Line. Include Name and Address in the e-mail.

***** As always, we will NEVER sell, loan, rent, or otherwise share your personal information *****

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." (Edmund Burke)

Join us in taking back our town. Get Involved & Volunteer!

TAX SEASON REVIEW

For most of us – this is the tax season. We are receiving, via U.S. Mail – W2 forms, 1099 forms and all kinds of financial and personal statements to inform us and to help us fill in and submit for our income tax reports to the state and the federal government. But, for the I.D. Thieves this is their Golden Winter Season. Why? Because so much financial/personal information is released and is flooding around in our world. Then, when we begin processing our info, unless we are every careful, we open the Golden Winter Season even wider for the thieves. Please review and consider the following suggestions and recommendations that can make you safer.

1. Pick up your mail as soon as possible after it is delivered. A locked mail box, (if possible) is a good idea, but not 100% guaranteed.

   If you can't pick up your mail – maybe because you are away from home – consider asking a friend or neighbor – you trust – to pick up your mail when they pick up their own mail.

   Or you can rent a P.O. Box. That way your mail is available to you when you are ready and it's in a safe place.

   If you are going on vacation during the tax season (or anytime) you might want to consider going to the U.S. Post Office and requesting your mail be put on hold until you return.

2. If you receive an e-mail, FAX, or telephone call from a source identifying themselves as the IRS – and they ask you for personal, private and/or financial information, <u>do not believe it and do not give it to them.</u> The IRS will not do that. If the message worries you, look up the IRS telephone number and contact them.

3. We need to keep our paper tax information for 7 years. So you have a folder of 8-year old "stuff". You can get rid of it, <u>BUT</u> do not simply toss it in the trash. We recommend you shred it or totally destroy the papers so no one can read and use information like your Social Security Number, account numbers, or bank names, etc.

4. If you decide to hire a tax service to prepare your tax statements for you, we strongly recommend you do not hire someone in a temporary store front service. Ask your family or friends for a recommendation to a local agency that is legitimately established and well-known.

5. If you will be using your home computer to process your tax data, be sure your computer Firewall and anti-virus is up-to-date. Use only the web sites you know are safe.

6. When you are ready to process your completed tax forms – if you will be using the U.S. Mail:

- Do not ever send cash.

- Send a money order or write a personal check.

- If you are sending a personal check- do not write the check with a ball point pen. Ball point ink can easily be removed from the paper with a simple household chemical. We recommend using a liquid ink pen. Liquid ink penetrates the paper and is more difficult to remove than ball point ink.

- Also make sure you do not address your check to the IRS. Federal payments of taxes should be addressed to the United States Treasury Department on your check. If you write IRS, the letters can easily be changed to MRS and a last name added by Identity thieves.

7. Mailing: We highly recommend when you are ready to mail your tax statements, take directly <u>into</u> the Post Office Building.

   Do not use the Blue Boxes the U.S. Post Office Dept. has on our streets – or even if the Blue Box is outside their office building. In the past, Blue Boxes outside their offices have been stolen from. And, last year, two Blue Boxes on Florida Avenue were ripped out of the concrete, emptied and the empty boxes were found in an open field in Winchester.

   If you must mail your tax statements from home – please wait until you see the mail person delivering mail on you street. Then deposit your envelopes in the mail box or just wait and hand the envelopes to the mail person.

ROBO CALLS

Since last Fall, Jenny has received a telephone call, every 10 days or so from Diane, in Oakland, who offers to clean her carpets. Dave received a call from – his phone said PRIVATE with no number – from XYZ Company who wants to sell him solar panels. Shirley called Mike, and wanted him to participate in an internet survey (on the telephone?) It just goes on and on. It seems and sounds like everyone is receiving telemarketing Robo Calls these days.

Robo Calls happen when telemarketers (from all over the country and sometimes out of the country) prerecord their message on an automatic dialer system. That automatic dialer system is very effective for the telemarketers; it can make millions of calls in a matter of hours. They are called Robocallers because they are using a robotic system that is hard to trace and cheap to make. It's all about the money. With this technology and competition, Robocalls have become the marketing tool that can also be the choice of fraudsters.

Why don't they give their full name and phone numbers up front? Because what they are doing is against federal laws. Companies that call your numbers without your permission and if you report them to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), they can face fines from $11,000 to $13,000 for each violation.

History

In 2003, the federal government implemented the National Do Not Call Registry. Millions of consumers signed up on the list to reduce, or stop, telemarketing calls. In the Spring of 2008, Congress strengthened and updated the laws. The rules now are:

- If on the Federal Do Not Call Registry you may receive all calls from relatives, friends, charities, politicians and people you've done business with in the last 18 months. Also, schools that house your children can call you. Police and Fire Departments can call to alert you to a problem. Airline companies can call to inform you of changes in your flight schedule.
- Additionally, Telemarketers are required to purchase the Do Not Call list every three months and are barred from calling any number on the list. If they violate the law and they are reported to the FTC, they can be fined for each call reported.

What To Do: We recommend:

1. If a robo-caller asks you for money, hang up.

2. Remember these calls are illegal unless you have given them written permission to call you.

3. **Do Not** press any key to opt out of future notifications or you will receive calls forever.

4. **Do Not** press any key to speak to the caller.

5. Or – if you are not sure who is calling you – let your phone go to your answering machine. If it is a robocall – there will be no message.

To Sign Up For The Federal Do Not Call List:

Phone: 1-888-382-1222
TTY: 1-866-290-4236

Website: **www.ftc.gov/donotcall**

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In California you may also access the Attorney General's Office for information at:

Phone: 1-800-952-5225
Website: **http://oag.ca.gov/donotcall**

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Despite the lists, it's impossible to stop all telemarketing calls. The best thing to do is hang up and report the offender's number to the FTC at:

600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington DC 20580	Toll Free: 1-877-382-4357 TTY: 1-866-653-4261	Website: **www.ftc.gov/donotcall**

SANDY'S VEHICLES

Super Storm Sandy – the east coast's storm continues. The flood waters damaged vehicles in the hundreds of thousands. Most of them will be scrapped, but many of them will find their way to the markets. Many of them will find their way to our market. Why do we say that? Because California residents, according to the national records, are the largest car buyers in the United States.

Not everyone who sells a flooded vehicle is a scammer. Some owners might fix their vehicles and sell it later on without even being aware of the fact they are passing on a ticking bomb. Water damage inside a vehicle can be insidious. The water damaged vehicle can run reasonably well after being flooded. Then they slowly rot and corrode away. The engine, transmission, brakes, air bags, cooling system and other things all might fail. Mold and contaminations can also cause health problems for the new owners and their passengers.

If you are about to buy a used vehicle, it would be wise to examine not only the vehicle itself, but also the information about the vehicle's history.

CHECK THE RECORDS

If in the months ahead you are considering to buy a used car or truck, we recommend you run or ask the vehicle's dealer to run three services for the consumer checks. If the vehicle is reported to have been damaged, we suggest you don't buy it.

Three free services available are:

- National Insurance Crime Bureau **www.ncib.org**
- CARFAX **www.carfax.com/flood**
- Auto Check **http://www.autocheck.com/storm**

Also, because those reports can miss a lot, we recommend you have the vehicle checked out by a reliable mechanic, experienced in auto-body work.

HOW TO CHECK THE VEHICLE OUT YOURSELF

It may be hard to spot water if the vehicle has been thoroughly cleaned. But try the list below to see if you can find future problems.

1. Sniff around the vehicle's cabin and the trunk. Water soaked leather and fabric can house mold or mildew. There may be a musty order. Be suspicious if you smell too much air freshener.

2. Lift up the carpets. Has silt and debris been trapped on the floor?

3. Look for rust and corrosion. Check interior screws, door hinges and metal brackets.

4. Inspect the headlights and tail lights. Look for water lines on the inside of the lenses or reflectors.

5. Look in the trunk. Check under the carpet and in the spare tire area. Is there silt, mildew or water marks?

6. Look under the hood. Look for water or milky colored oil stains.

7. Carefully test drive the vehicle. Look for and observe hesitation, rough operations and other malfunctions.

8. Turn on the heater and air conditioner system. Mold can cycle through a vehicle's air system. Breathing that could cause serious respiratory problems for you and/or your family or passengers.

Know Your Neighbors

We all want to keep crime out of our neighborhoods. One of the best tools ever invented – is being good neighbors. When neighbors practice working together (with each other and with law enforcement – when needed) your community will be safer from criminals. The battle against crime will not be won by people acting alone, you should be united to be safer.

However, we must all realize that we must take the first step by, every so often, to review and update security steps we must take to make ourselves, our family, our home and our possessions more secure. Once that is done, we should work on the second step, and one of the most vital steps, by starting a dialogue with our neighbors. You should know who they are and what they look like, so you will recognize them when they are moving around on their property or on your streets. And, you should know their full names (how they are spelled), their house number and their phone numbers. Why? If you have to make a call to the fire or police departments wouldn't it be better to know these things?

You don't have to be best friends, casual friendships are good too. Why is this important? Here are some examples of what you can do for each other:

- If you see their puppy roaming around the neighborhood – let them know.
- If you see their garage door is still open – call them (an open door is an open invitation).
- If you see a stranger you've never seen before get in their vehicle and drive away – let them know.

They might tell you:

- Oh! Thanks, I'll go get him.
- Oh! Gosh – I forgot.
- Oh – that's our nephew. We are going to Palm Springs, he went to get gas. Or –
- Oh Gosh, I just came in the house for a minute. I left the vehicle running and all my keys are in it.

You might wonder – how do we know for sure what our neighbors names, addresses, phone numbers, kids and pets names really are? In case of an emergency – will I really remember? Maybe not. That's why we recommend you look at the last page of this newsletter and consider filling in the empty spaces. Then keep the sheet close to your phone.

So how do I get this information? You might consider inviting the folks who live around you (front and back) to meet together, maybe in your back yard. You could talk about this article, the things that have happened in your neighborhood and share information. You might want to make copies of the next page and explain why it's important. You might even consider learning if they would like to establish a Neighborhood Watch. If so, you can give us a call and we could schedule a date and time to join you and your neighbors to provide more information.

HEMET POLICE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU

YOU HAVE A QUESTION? WE HAVE ANSWERS

Send your comments, suggestions, question, or just interesting thoughts to the Hemet Police Department. We might even publish them in a future edition of the Quarterly Newsletter. Reach us at:

Hemet Police Department
Neighborhood Watch, R. Moyer
450 East Latham Avenue
Hemet, CA 92543

Phone	E-Mail	Fax
(951) 765-2415	rmoyer@cityofhemet.org	(951) 765-2412

LEFT ACROSS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Home _____

Phone Work _____

Vehicles license make year color

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Children _____

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ACROSS

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LEFT SIDE

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Phone Home _____

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OUR HOUSE

PREVENT CRIME
KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

HEMET POLICE
DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION BUREAU

765-2415

RIGHT SIDE

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Address: _____

Phone Home _____

Phone Work _____

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