

Notes from 11:00 am Dewatto Community Meeting August 1, 2020 @ Port of Dewatto Bldg.

Carl Zarelli introduced Mason County Sheriff's deputies Matt Colbensen and R. Castillo who addressed the agenda items that Carl had proposed for the community meeting.

- 1. Contact Procedures for the Sheriff:**
 - a. If it's an emergency, call 911**
 - b. For non-emergencies: 360 426-4441**

- 2. To contact someone specific in the Sheriff's office: 360 427-9670 ext. 313**

- 3. How to Open a Case:**
 - a. 911 calls and non-emergency calls are automatically assigned a case number that's used to collect information regarding the incident/accident/crime**
 - b. Non-emergency calls are assigned a case number depending on what the subject is.**

- 4. If it's a call about an administrative subject or just a question, the Sheriff's department may not assign a case number. If you report a non-emergency situation that pertains to a subject worth tracking such as a crime, then there will be a case number assigned and you can ask the deputy to give it to you.**

- 5. You can use the case number to report the loss/theft to your insurance company and/or call the Sheriff's office to ask what's happening with the case. The sheriff's noted that the county will not voluntarily provide a case number it has to be asked for.**

- 6. Follow Up Actions by the Sheriff**
 - a. Unless something comes up pertaining to your case, the Sheriff's office will not call you. However, you may call the Sheriff's office and with your case number, you can report any additional information or ask about status of the case. If the deputy who handled your case isn't available, ask for the shift supervisor.**

7. Prevention: Deputy Colbensen gave a list of suggestions for community members to consider to prevent burglaries:

a. Lock your windows and doors. For those who have window air conditioners, be aware that thieves know those windows aren't locked. Don't leave tools out that can be used for entry to a home.

b. Install motion-sensing lighting around your house.

c. For sliding doors, consider a "clamp lock" or other devices that will prevent someone from lifting the door out of the frame to enter.

d. French doors should have a locking mechanism (throw bolt or flush bolt) at the top and bottom of the doors.

e. Consider a dog, even a "Beware of Dog" sign can be a deterrent.

f. Install an alarm, the louder the better. Post an alarm system warning sign.

g. The deputy recommended that if you install a camera system, install it at "head height" or lower. While a camera is harder to spot and/or steal if it's mounted high, it's difficult to identify the people in the photo when it's taken from above, particularly if the person is wearing a hat or a hoodie.

Game cameras are a good, inexpensive method to capture photos of suspicious people. Signs do not need to be posted to have a camera on your property, but it may be a good idea to post signs to let someone know who has intentions to break in that there are cameras recording.

h. Deputy Colbensen mentioned installing a chime/alarm system, one can be set for a door chime or set as an alarm. Someone asked about

false alarms. At this time, the Sheriff does not charge for false alarms that they respond to.

i. For entry doors, consider having at least two locking mechanisms, one of which should be a deadbolt. Install the deadbolt with longer screws that go deep into the door framing.

5. General Information and answers to Questions

a. Deputy Castillo explained that the Sheriff's department has separated the county into North and South districts and how the department runs its shifts to cover the territory. He said that crime has increased considerably in the county; that they are closing in on 22,000 calls a year.

b. Does the Sheriff have access to the Fire Department's Knox Box for entry into locked gates? No. For gates with codes, when you call 911, give them the code. You can also have the code on file at the Sheriff's department.

c. How do we contact the Sheriff's office by email? The Mason County Sheriff's Office website has an email contact.

d. Can the Sheriff do "push notifications" via phone the way the Fire Department can? Yes, they have the capability to "push" (text) to cell phones, but it's county-wide and can't be narrowed down to a smaller location.

e. The deputies had suggestions for how the community can keep members aware of events that might have an impact on them: Private Facebook page; Next Door app, Twitter, Instagram. Currently we will use an email group but I will look into these alternative methods.

f. The Sheriff's Office has a Block Watch program with Sgt. Bill Reed assigned to head up the program. He can be reached at the 360 427-9670 x313 number if the community needs more help/information

We hope this answered a number of questions raised. Many thanks to Jeana at the Port for getting us this room at no cost and to the Mason County Sheriff's office for coming down to answer our questions. My thanks to Suzanne Stevens for helping me on this effort and to those that showed up. We had a good turnout.

Notes by Suzanne Stevens and Carl Zarelli