What Is Suspicious Behavior?

We can’t stress enough the importance of reporting suspicious behavior. All too often persons feel that if they dial 911 for minor things, they are burdening the police or believe that “someone else” will make the call. The police department looks at all concerns and welcomes each and every call. We all work together to keep our community safe.

Sometimes, however, a person may not know what suspicious behavior looks like. To know what is suspicious, you must consider anything out of the “normal” behavior for the neighborhood. Knowing your neighbors is crucial to becoming a safer community.

Examples of suspicious activity may include some of the following:

- Unusual noises, including screaming, sounds of fighting, glass breaking
- Persons in and/or around buildings or areas with no legitimate purpose
- Unauthorized persons in restricted areas
- Vehicles driving slowly and aimlessly through the area, around schools, parking lots, or at night without their lights on
- Persons sitting in vehicles for extended periods of time
- Persons peering into parked vehicles that do not belong to them
- Persons with a changed behavior when they realize they have been seen
- Persons dressed inappropriately for the weather or occasion
- Abandoned parcels or items left in unusual areas

Reporting Suspicious Behavior?

When calling 911, or 615-822-1111 be prepared to give an accurate description of what is happening and where you are in relation to what is happening. There is a lot of information that the dispatcher will ask for, and it may not pertain to every situation, but be patient with him/her. The call taker is communication to officers who may be arriving in a dangerous situation, and need to prepare the officer for this situation.

When you call 911, focus on what is happening “now”, even if you are reporting a situation that has a history of activity (fighting neighbors, for example). The call taker is trying to determine the nature of the immediate incident and what resources need to be sent. The background information can be obtained at a later time.

Better To Report Than Not

Remember that it is always better to report a person or situation and have it turn out not to be anything rather than not report the incident and find out later that a crime was committed. By the way, you will not get into trouble for reporting something that you feel is suspicious and upon checking it out, we discover that nothing was amiss.
What the 911 Call Taker Needs To Know

Information the call taker may ask for includes:
- What is happening
- Where is it happening and where you are in relation to what is happening
- What does the person/activity look like
- If a person, what did they say?
- Were any weapons displayed or was there a threat of a weapon
- What is the persons/vehicles last known location and direction of travel

If you are reporting a vehicle, or a person in a vehicle, please provide as much information about the vehicle that you can. Consider the acronym CYMBOL—Color, Year, Make, Body Type, Other Identifiers, License Number.

You Do Not Have To Give Your Name & Information When Reporting

Some are reluctant to call 911 because they are concerned that if they call, the person(s) about whom they called will know who reported them. You need not feel concerned. Simply inform the call taker that you wish to remain anonymous. When officers make contact with the subject of the call, they are trained not to divulge the callers information. If you are concerned, and wish to find out the outcome of the concern, you may request that the officer call you back and inform you of the outcome of the incident. The important thing to remember is to simply call.

Resources

Any information you desire may be provided by the Hendersonville Police Department Community Services Office. You may contact the office at any time using the below information or follow us on Facebook.

Director: Greg Freudenthal
Office: 615-590-2677
Fax: 615-590-1014
E-Mail: communityservices@hendersonville-pd.org
Web: www.hendersonville-pd.org or www.hendersonvillecrimestoppers.com