

COMMUNITY ALERT

Provided by: Tucker Crime Prevention Unit of the DeKalb Police Department

MAIL THEFT

I was contacted recently by a N/W Coordinator in the Idlewood Road area regarding mail theft in their community. The thieves followed the mail carrier and then removed mail from residents' mailboxes. They opened the mail, took what interested them, and left the remains in other mailboxes. A box of business cards was taken from one resident's mailbox and then used by the mail thieves to place in other mailboxes, in an effort to look like they were distributing sales literature, so they wouldn't appear suspicious. Neighbors promptly called 911, followed the suspects into other neighborhoods, and provided suspect descriptions (clothing, height, body build, etc.).

When police arrived on the scene, one of the two suspects (1 male, 1 female) was apprehended. Unfortunately, at the time of the apprehension, the male subject had nothing on his person to link him to these thefts. However, if the witnesses can identify him from a photo line up, then the link to the thefts can be made.

Proactive measures:

- * Use direct deposit whenever possible to eliminate checks in your mailbox.
- * Have your personal checks sent to your bank and pick them up there.
- * Look into the attributes of a locked mailbox.
- * If you are frequently away from home, consider a post office box.
- * If you stop your mail while on vacation or while away from your residence for an extended period, ask a neighbor to pick up any mail that was delivered in error.
- * **Don't hesitate to call 911 when you see suspicious persons, vehicles, or behavior.**

I am sending this information to all Tucker Precinct N/W Coordinators to share with your communities as this activity can occur anywhere. Tax stimulus checks and income tax refunds are likely to be in mailboxes now, so mail theft may be on the increase.

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Thieves are also interested in your credit card statements, pre-approved credit card offers, Social Security checks, birthday cards, etc. either for the cash or the information contained within that can be used for Identity Theft.

Most important is how an active, alert N/W community can spring into action and play a significant role in removing criminals from our streets. **Police and communities working together as a team can only improve the safety of our neighborhoods.** Although we never want any citizen to put themselves in harm's way, information regarding crimes in progress, suspicious persons/behavior, and suspect descriptions that residents can provide to police are extremely helpful in identifying and apprehending suspects.

Please distribute this information to all of your residents.

Thank you for your commitment to the N/W program and for all the good work you do...it does have a *positive* effect !!

Respectfully,
Sharen Dorcon
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