



TOSA WATCH

Wauwatosa's Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

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TOSA WATCH - Wauwatosa's Neighborhood Watch Newsletter is sponsored by:

The Wauwatosa Police Department-Community Support Division
1700 North 116th Street
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53226
Telephone: (414) 471-8430
FAX: (414) 471-8470

TOSA WATCH provides useful information for citizens who participate in the Wauwatosa Block Watch Program. Reader comments and contributions are welcome.

Report Non-Emergency Crime Online

Were you a victim or witness to a crime in Wauwatosa? The Wauwatosa Police Department offers an [online reporting tool](#) for certain non-emergency incidents.

Residents should use the online reporting portal to report:

- Retail theft
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Vehicle entry
- Fraud/Identity Theft

We also accept reports of past retail thefts submitted online by retailers.

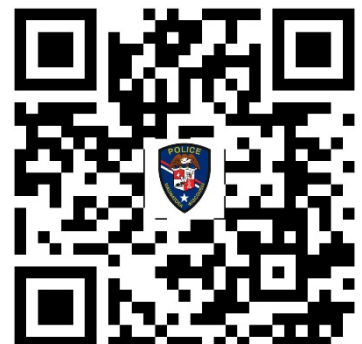
When a report is submitted online, a patrol supervisor reviews the information and assigns it to a staff member to document or investigate further.

If any digital evidence exists, such as photos, videos, or documents, the investigating staff member will contact you and provide a secure link for submitting that evidence.

“Sometimes people hesitate to report smaller incidents because they think it’s not worth our time,” said Lt. Cory Wex. “But we want to know when these things happen. Even small reports can help us identify patterns in a neighborhood or guide where we focus patrols.”

[File an online report](#), here or use the QR Code to the right.

If the incident you wish to report is an emergency, a crime in progress or involves any type of injury, please stop now and dial 9-1-1. For any incident that requires a police officer to respond dial the police non-emergency number **414-471-8430** and ask for Dispatch.



Will You Be My Valentine?

Will you be my Valentine, is back for its sixth year. The program is well received by our facilities and we'd like to make visits again this year. So, Support Services is looking for help once again. We will visit Oak Park and Hart Park Square assisted living facilities on Friday, February 13th to present them with decorated Valentines. Seniors can often times be forgotten but still want to feel loved and appreciated. So, do you have a little artist in the family? Do you watch a group of kids that might be looking for something to do?

Well, we have the hearts if you have the time to work your magic. Our goal is to collect 100 valentine cards to distribute. If you let us know how many you'd be interested in helping with, we can get the hearts to you, or you can stop by the Wauwatosa Police Department, at 1700 North 116th Street and ask for them at the Front Desk. When they are finished, you can bring them back to the police department or you can give us a call and we can come get them too.

For additional information please contact Laura Laurishke at 414-471-8430 at ext. 5111 or email, llaurishke@wauwatosa.net. Any help you can give would be most appreciated.



Wauwatosa Police Department's Hot Spot Policing Strategy

National research shows that crime isn't evenly spread across a city—about 5% of locations see nearly half of all crime. But police don't just respond to crimes; we also handle many other situations to keep the community safe and reduce harm.

With that in mind, the Wauwatosa Police Department started using Hot Spot policing in 2024. This is a proven crime-prevention strategy that directs officers to areas where crime and harm are more likely to occur.

By sending officers to these areas to be present and visible, our goal is to deter crime and improve the safety of the community. The directed patrols happen daily at random times and last about 15 minutes. Initial results show that spending extra time at the Hot Spots is effective, with calls for service decreasing. We continue to review this program and make adjustments as needed. If you have noticed police regularly in the same areas, it's possible you've seen a Hot Spot patrol taking place.

Suspicious Circumstances

Recognizing suspicious activity is as simple as asking yourself, could the vehicle or person(s) I am observing:

- Be about to commit a crime?
- Be in the act of committing a crime?
- Have just committed a crime?

In your neighborhood you can rely on your personal knowledge. Do you recognize the vehicle or person as a resident or frequent visitor to the area? Do you know a house to be vacant? This is where knowing your neighbors pays off. Using personal knowledge of one's surroundings helps you to decide if something is suspicious.

If you see a suspicious vehicle, can you tell if the vehicle is occupied? Do you recognize the vehicle? Does the vehicle appear to be in the area for a purpose, or is it just sitting there? Whether the vehicle is occupied or unoccupied, if you feel it's suspicious or threatening, you should call the police.

Reporting a suspicious circumstance to the police should always be something to consider. Call 911 immediately if you believe that a crime is in progress. If you suspect that you or someone else is in immediate danger or injured, do not hesitate to call 911. This will insure the quickest police response.

The Wauwatosa Police Department's non-emergency number is 414-471-8430. This number is used for incidents which are not "in progress".

Bottom line: never hesitate to call the police should you feel concerned about a suspicious circumstance, vehicle or person. You should always err on the side of caution. There have been many criminals scared away before the crime, stopped in the act of a crime, or arrested after the crime because a concerned citizen called the police based on suspicion. Thanks for keeping watch!

Snow Removal

The City of Wauwatosa has municipal codes that must be followed in regard to snow and ice removal from your sidewalk and crosswalks. One has twenty-four hours to clear snow or to use calcium chloride, sodium chloride, other acceptable deicing materials or sand to make these areas safe for passage.

Also remember, if you have a fire hydrant on your property, one should keep the hydrant from being obscured and free for the Wauwatosa Fire Department to make connections. This action will save time, when time really does matter.



Let's try to keep everyone safe and if you need help clearing the hydrant, ask neighbors for help.

**Sunday, March 8th
Daylight Savings
Begins At 2AM,
Spring Forward**

Wauwatosa Police Department

James MacGillis – Chief of Police

Support Services

*Captain Luke Vetter
Lieutenant Cory Wex
Sergeant Thomas Orlowski
Specialist II Dexter Schleis
School Officer Farris Griffin
School Officer Maria Albiter
School Officer Kelsey Pentimalli
Community Support Specialist –
Laura Laurishke*

Crime Statistics

Comparative Analysis – City Wide

Category	01-01-24 thru 11-30-24	01-01-25 thru 11-30-25	Percentage of Change 2024 - 2025
Part 1 Crimes			
Sexual Assault	26	16	-38.46%
Robbery	24	19	-20.83%
Assault	121	117	-3.31%
Burglary	63	53	-15.87%
Larceny-Theft	1,335	1,208	-9.51%
Motor Vehicle Theft	156	87	-44.23%
Subtotal of Part 1 Crimes	1,725	1,500	-13.04%
Other Select Incidents			
Fraud	210	248	18.10%
Vandalism	131	102	-22.14%
Narcotic Law Violations	59	59	0.00%
Drunken Driving	99	89	-10.10%
Disorderly Conduct	1,889	1,891	0.11%
Fatal MVA	1	0	-
Personal Injury MVA	138	151	9.42%
Property Damage MVA	867	1,022	17.88%
Total of All Calls	36,449	33,820	-7.21%

Note: The above are incidents that are reported and investigated by the Police Department. Actual crime classifications usually change when the complaints are finally analyzed and dispositions are determined. This may result in different numbers reported to the NIBRS incident-based reporting system at the end of the year.

If there is something you'd like addressed in this newsletter, please contact Laura Laurishke at 414-471-8430 ext. 5111 or email llaurishke@wauwatosa.net. We will do our best to accommodate your request.

Recognizing and Avoiding Scams: What You Should Know

At some point, most of us have received calls, emails, or text messages that made us stop and question whether the request was legitimate. Scammers continue to get more sophisticated, and even well-informed people can fall victim.

Here's your chance to test your knowledge. The Better Business Bureau offers a short online quiz covering five common scam topics to help you learn what to do—and what *not* to do—when faced with suspicious messages. You can find it here: [Scams - Test Your Knowledge](#).

While we'd like to believe most people can spot a scam, the Wauwatosa Police Department still receives numerous reports from individuals who become trapped by these schemes. Scammers make an astonishing amount of money each year. To help keep yourself safe, here are a few important tips:

Tips to Avoid Scams

- **Delete messages from unknown senders.** You know who your bank, credit card companies, and service providers are. Don't let a message frighten you into reacting without thinking.
- **Beware of requests for gold, gift cards, or money orders.** If someone contacts you claiming you must pay a debt or claim a prize using any of these methods, just say "No." It's a scam.
- **Be cautious with online friendships and dating.** Not all online connections are bad—but scammers often exploit companionship. If someone you've never met asks you to buy items, send gift cards, or claims they lack reliable internet access, do not comply. Photos and stories can be fabricated. Protect yourself.
- **Never share your personal information.** Do not give out passwords, Social Security numbers, or credit card information. A legitimate business or organization will never request information they already have.
- **Rely on trusted recommendations.** Family and friends can help you identify reputable businesses and organizations.
- **Use "https" websites when browsing or entering information.** While "https" helps protect sensitive data from interception, it does *not* protect you from phishing attempts or malicious content on a site.
- **Do not feel pressured to donate immediately.** A legitimate charity will allow you time to verify their information before you give.
- **Remember: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.**

Reporting Scams

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) is a valuable resource for marketplace issues and scam reporting. You can file a complaint, post a review, or report a scam to help protect others.

The Wauwatosa Police Department encourages you to report suspicious behavior to law enforcement first, and then follow up by reporting the activity to the BBB so the community stays informed.

To file a complaint online, visit [File a Complaint](#) at the BBB's website or contact:

Better Business Bureau of Wisconsin
10019 W. Greenfield Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53214
Phone: 414-847-6000