



CITIZEN AWARENESS PROGRAM

(C.A.P.)

The Citizens Awareness Program is designed specifically to assist an organized neighborhood in their effort to reduce crime. The Cobb County Police Department is dedicated to working with our citizens, however, we need your help. As Cobb County continues to grow, the demand for police service increases. The police cannot be everywhere. By becoming the "eyes and ears" of the police, you can become part of a winning team.

Consider the following facts:

- 96% of all burglaries occur during the day
- Burglars look for the quickest and quietest way to gain entry into a structure.
- Most burglars spend less than six minutes in a house.
- Almost one third of all houses are entered through an unlocked door or window.
- Many burglars will return in a month or so, after the initial incident.
- In 1996, the ratio of police officers to citizens was approximately 2000 to 1

The first and most important part of this process is to realize no private citizen can take the place of the police. We do not expect you to. You will not be asked to patrol or detain persons. We will ask you to be alert, look for suspicious activity, report the activity to police and inform your neighbors. Matters such as making arrests, should be left up to police.

You may first ask what is suspicious? Everyone has a different opinion. The best guideline to use is if a situation you see requires you to make an excuse to explain it, it is suspicious enough for you to call police. For example, a person that is walking through the neighborhood you are fairly certain does not live or work there. Or a car that drives by your house late at night and it does not belong in the neighborhood. What if you are wrong? What if you call the police on a relative of a neighbor or a delivery man looking for an address? **Don't be embarrassed!** The worst thing you have done is increased police patrol in your community by having a uniform patrol car drive through your neighborhood. Just call police and have them check the situation out. If he or she is legitimate, they will be released and allowed to complete their business. If they are not, the police will take appropriate action. Before you convince yourself a burglar is a visiting relative, pick up the phone and call 9-1-1.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND BETTER JUDGEMENT.

In Cobb County to report suspicious activity such as a crime, a fire or a situation requiring emergency medical assistance. The correct number to dial is 9-1-1. The emergency 911 system in Cobb County cannot be overloaded, nor will you ever receive a busy signal or recording. The 911 system is enhanced to provide the communication center with the caller's phone number, address, police jurisdiction. It also includes the nearest fire station, cross streets and map coordinates! Cobb County Department of Public Safety wants you to utilize this system! If you were in a danger, the police could be sent to your location even if you were unable to provide your location.

When you do observe something suspicious, it is important that you stay on the phone to update responding officers. Your help in providing up to date descriptions, locations and a direction of travel will help the officers capture the subject. Without your updates, the officers may very well drive past the perpetrators as they enter the neighborhood. It is also important that you give good descriptions.

The ability to describe people and automobiles is not a skill we are born with. If you find it difficult to give accurate descriptions, do not be discouraged. With a little of training you too can learn. Here are some guidelines:

PEOPLE

- Look at height, weight, and a "physical build" first.
- Look for anything that attracts your attention such as scars marks or tatoos.
- Try to compare them to someone you know.

AUTOMOBILES

- See how many doors the car has.
- Check the color.
- Look for damage.
- Listen for distinctive noises.
- Look for after market items.
- Look for bumper stickers or decals.
- Look for the tag (license plate) number.

Remember the acronym CYMBAL...

Color
Year
Make
Body
And
License #