

**MARSHFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**“POLICE PLAIN TALK”**  
**JANUARY 4, 2020**

**PASSING SNOWPLOWS AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES**

The majority of crashes involving snowplows and vehicles happen when a snowplow is rear ended or hit while being passed. Snow plows have wing plow blades that can extend anywhere between two (2) and ten (10) feet beyond the width of the truck. This wing plow blade is often not seen because of the snow cloud being kicked up by the snowplow. These wing plows can often weigh as much as a compact car. You should also know that it is illegal (state statute 346.915) to follow a snowplow closer than 200 feet upon any highway having the posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour if the snowplow is engaged in snow and ice removal. This does not apply when overtaking and passing a snowplow. But if the operator of any vehicle upon a highway having a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour, follows the snowplow more closely than 200 feet for one mile or more, or follows more closely than 200 feet when the snowplow is moving at the maximum speed limit of the roadway, this is convincing and legal evidence that the operator of such following vehicle is violating this law.

There are three safety rules that are worth following:

- Give snowplows plenty of room to work. They are big and hard to see around.
- Don't pass a working snowplow—they can throw up a cloud of snow that could cause a whiteout and disorient you.
- Also, it is tough for snowplow drivers to see you. Don't crowd the plow. Make sure when behind a plow that you can see the driver's mirrors so he can see you. Remember, it is the law that you stay at least 200 feet behind a working snowplow.

One of the major hazards emergency workers and road crews face is being struck by passing motorists while the workers are performing their duties, and their emergency vehicle/machinery is parked with its flashing lights activated.

Wisconsin law states that the operator of any vehicle which approaches an emergency vehicle, such as a police squad, ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, or road machinery must do one of the following:

- Move into another lane if the roadway has at least two lanes, or
- Reduce speed until completely past the vehicle or machinery if there is only one lane or if it is unsafe to change lanes.

You can keep emergency workers and road crews safe by reducing speed and allowing as much room as possible as you pass.

For a state-wide road report call 511 or check the internet site <http://www.511wi.gov/web/>

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JANUARY 11, 2020**

**ADULT SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD RECOGNITION WEEK:  
JANUARY 13 -17, 2020**

Each day, dedicated adult crossing guards in our city show up at their assigned crossings to assist students in their journeys to or from school. The City of Marshfield honors our adult crossing guards for their commitment to child pedestrian safety during School Crossing Guard Recognition Week. Adult school crossing guards play a critical role in keeping students safe as they walk to and from school each day. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, approximately 1,000 children between the ages 5 and 9 are killed each year in pedestrian accidents. Adult school crossing guards place the children’s safety above their own by ensuring all traffic is stopped before students enter the roadway while facing speeding motorists, cell phone users and others disregarding traffic signals.

As part of the week-long celebration parents, students, teachers and school administrative staff are encouraged to give thank-you cards, or simply say “THANK YOU” to school crossing guards who live by the motto “Safety is First with Us Every Day.”

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**JANUARY 18, 2020**

**TAX-RELATED IDENTITY THEFT**

Tax-related identity theft occurs when someone uses a stolen Social Security number to file a tax return to claim a fraudulent refund. A taxpayer's SSN can be stolen through a data breach, a computer hack or a lost wallet. Although identity theft affects a small percentage of tax returns, it can have a major impact on victims by delaying their refunds.

Here are some tips to protect you from becoming a victim and steps to take if you think someone may have filed a tax return using your name and Social Security number:

Tips to protect you from becoming a victim of identity theft:

- File early.
- Don't carry your Social Security card or any documents that include your Social Security number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).
- Don't give a business your SSN or ITIN just because they ask. Give it only when required.
- Protect your financial information.
- Check your credit report often. There is a website available for you to access your report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). For free credit reports, rotate checking the following credit report sites once every four months: Experian, Transunion and Equifax.
- Review your Social Security Administration earnings statement annually.
- Secure personal information in your home.
- Protect your personal computers by using firewalls and anti-spam/virus software, updating security patches and changing passwords for internet accounts.
- Don't give personal information over the phone, through the mail or on the internet unless you have initiated the contact or you are sure you know who you are dealing with. Also when on the internet, use websites that start with **https** which means the site is secure.

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**JANUARY 25, 2020**

**VEHICLE WARMING DANGERS**  
**WINTER DRIVING TIPS**

A common Wisconsin practice is to allow vehicles to run during the coldest winter months, even when no one is in them. While it is advisable to warm the vehicle enough to clear the windows of frost and snow, there are dangers associated with doing this.

- Running an unlocked vehicle invites some people to not only steal your vehicle, but any valuables you may have inside it as well. We recommend you use a second set of keys or keyless entry (if equipped) to keep your vehicle secure at all times.
- Poisonous carbon monoxide gases can leak into parked vehicles and affect the driver and passengers without any warning.
- Never leave a vehicle running in a garage. Back completely out and close the garage door. This is the only way to ensure that carbon monoxide does not enter your home.

Motorists are reminded that during the winter months you need to remove snow and frost from your vehicle before driving. This includes brushing the snow away from the windows, headlights, rear taillights, and license plate area. Failure to do this is not only unsafe, but illegal and could result in a citation.

Don't drive your vehicle until the windshield, side windows, and rear window are snow and frost free so that you have a clear view of the road. Your own child, friend, or relative may be the person you fail to see if your car windows are not clear.

**MARSHFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT  
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FEBRUARY 1, 2020**

**RABIES VACCINATION CLINIC  
AND  
ANIMAL LICENSING**

Every year local veterinarians sponsor a rabies vaccination clinic. This is to facilitate pet owners to have their animals (older than five months of age) immunized against this deadly and preventable disease.

**Rabies Clinic**

When: Saturday, March 14, 2020

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Location: Marshfield Mall (please use the Furniture and Appliance Mart entrance only).

Cost: \$15.00 per pet.

Microchip includes registration: \$15 per pet.

**Pet Licensing Procedure**

The Marshfield Police Department ordinance officers will also be on hand to issue annual animal licenses (cash or checks only). Dogs and cats residing in the city must be licensed by March 31 of each year after they have reached the age of five months. The cost is \$8 for spayed or neutered dogs and \$6 for spayed or neutered cats. The cost is \$16 for unspayed or unneutered dogs and \$12 for unspayed or unneutered cats. Owners who license their pets after March 31 will have to pay a late fee of \$5 per animal licensed.

Licenses can also be obtained at the city treasurer's office Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The treasurer's office is in the new City Hall building located at 207 West 6th Street.

City ordinance requires the licensing of all cats and dogs inside the city limits of Marshfield on a yearly basis. The license requirement is for your safety to ensure that the animals have had their proper shots. The license is also used for the safe return of your pets if they are lost. Failure to license your pet may result in a fine of \$124.

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**FEBRUARY 8, 2020**

**ONLINE CLASSIFIED AD RISKS**

Online classified advertisements on websites like Craigslist, Etsy or eBay Classifieds are a double-edged sword. On one hand they offer a convenient means of setting up transactions like buying or selling goods, posting or finding jobs, and listing or seeking rental properties. But on the other hand, the open nature of these sites that appeals to their users also appeals to scammers. If you are looking online for a rental property and find an unreal deal, be very, very cautious.

Imposter scams are the primary way con artists use these sites to victimize the public. Fraudsters regularly post fake ads for rentals, employment opportunities and products for sale. According to Craigslist’s safety page, most of these rip-offs share a number of common characteristics:

- You are interacting by email or text with someone who is not in your area;
- The transaction begins with a vague initial inquiry, and the back and forth communications are riddled with spelling and grammatical errors;
- You are asked to make a payment by wire transfer, prepaid debit or gift cards, PayPal or another service that provides instant transactions that leave little trace; and
- The other party either refuses to meet or claims to be unable to meet face-to-face to complete the transaction.

Some tips to remember when dealing with another party through an online classified ad:

- If you are making a purchase or selling an item, deal locally and meet face-to-face with the other party in a public place. The Marshfield Police Department has an internet exchange zone located on First Street in front of the building, and some other police departments offer their station lobbies or parking lots as “safe zones” to use for the transactions (call your local police department to inquire before establishing it as the meeting point).
- Always be suspicious of over-the-top claims and too-good-to-be-true prices.
- Never wire funds to strangers or provide the code and PIN from a prepaid debit or gift card.
- Never rent a property sight unseen or provide information for a background check for a rental or a job until you have met a potential landlord or employer in person.
- If someone sends you a check and asks you to cash it and return a portion or send a portion to another person, it is a scam.

For additional information or to file a complaint, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at <http://datep.wi.gov>, send an e-mail to [datep hotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datep hotline@wisconsin.gov) or call the Consumer Information Hotline toll-free at 1-800-422-7129. You can also connect with Consumer Hotline on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/wiconsumer](http://www.facebook.com/wiconsumer).

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**FEBRUARY 15, 2020**

**CITIZENS’ POLICE ACADEMY**

The Marshfield Police Department has revamped its citizens’ police academy program. We will be holding classes on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for seven (7) consecutive weeks, starting in April. Class size is limited to 20 adults.

The goals of the citizens’ police academy are:

- To provide citizens a working knowledge of law enforcement operations, including support staff.
- To strengthen law enforcement/community relations.
- To obtain valued feedback from the community through citizen participation.
- To increase citizen knowledge about police functions.
- To enhance employee’s instructor training skills.

The above objectives are met with the use of hands-on interactive experiences in areas such as crime scene investigations; SWAT tactics; utilization of police department firearms at the police range; and observe firsthand how the K-9 unit performs its duties.

If you are interested in participating, please call Peggy at 384-0800 between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.