

When should I call the Police?



A Guide for Residents

The battle against crime is the combined efforts of police and our residents. Because **Tampa Police** cannot be at all places, all the times – the Tampa Police Department is dependent on resident cooperation in the fight against crime. Our community is extremely safe but, crimes could be prevented if more residents would be alert for suspicious activity and take appropriate measures to notify Police.

Neighborhood Watch (NW)

Consider becoming a part of Cory Lakes Isles NW by contacting our NW Coordinator, Sheryl Springer at sheryl@corylakenw.com. NW is a group of volunteer residents coming together to communicate with each other and the Tampa Police to reduce crime. We are the citizens behind the “eyes and ears” of the Police.

When should I call the police?

If you observe suspicious activity, even though you may not be the only witness, take the initiative and call the Police. Do not rely on someone else to act – this may never happen. You could be the only caller, and police questioning the individuals seen lurking in or repeatedly traveling through areas often deters crimes.

Many people fail to act because they are not sure if what they are observing is worth reporting or afraid of retaliation. When in doubt, ***first, call the Police immediately***. Then, contact the Security Guard at the Cross Creek Gatehouse at **(813)-907-8400** or the Morris Bridge Gatehouse at **(813)-986-0030** and email your NW coordinator at sheryl@corylakenw.com.

How Do I Report a Crime?

If you suspect that a crime is being or is about to be committed, please dial, **911**. You need not give your name. However, if you want a police officer to contact you, give your name, address, and telephone number and advise the Emergency Communications Technician (the call taker) that you would like to meet with an officer.

What is suspicious activity?

- A stranger around your neighbor's house or a strange vehicle parked near your neighbor's home.

- The sound of breaking glass.
- Anyone peering into vehicles or removing tags, gasoline, or auto parts.
- An improperly parked car, or a parked car with someone in it who seems out of place.
- Someone carrying property such as TVs, stereos, or tools that can be used to break into homes
- Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle or street corner.
- A constant flow of strangers to and from a particular house on a regular basis, especially during late evening hours.
- Persons involved in a fight or any explosion or scream.
- Door-to-door solicitations or any stranger knocking on doors (burglars sometimes knock at the door first to see if anyone is at home).
- Recurring appearances of a strange vehicle in the neighborhood.
- Persons standing around, possibly acting as lookouts.

Auto Speeding

The Police and our community are always surveying the community for speeders.

- If you notice someone speeding. Please **don't risk putting yourself in harm's way.**
- Take down the license plate number; the color and make of the vehicle. Call the Police non-emergency number at **(813)-231-6130** to report an auto speeder. If this is a repeat speeder, especially at a certain time of the day, let the Police know this.

Burglar in your home

If you return home and believe that someone may have broken in while you were away:

- Leave immediately! Do not enter your home!
- Go to a neighbor's house or some other location and dial the emergency number for the police, **911**.
- Wait for the police; do not return to your home until officers have checked it.

Reasons Some People Give for Not Reporting Suspected Criminal Activity

- **It's none of my business.**

You may be the next victim.

- Someone else may be reporting it.

May be not!

- The police are too busy.

Calls of in-progress crimes or suspicious activity are always important.

- That noise may not be anything.

If so, why did it attract your attention?

- That unknown person may be visiting the neighbors.

May be not! It's best to be certain.

- That strange car may just be lost.

There may be a crime about to occur.

- The stranger at your door seems friendly, her or she was just lost.

This is how some burglars determine if anyone is home.

- I could be wrong, and there is no crime occurring.

May be not! But then again, no harm is done by investigating it.

- The criminals might retaliate if I report them.

Though this could occur, experience indicates this happens in extremely rare cases.

- I do not care what happens off my property.

Apathy breeds crime. You could be next.

- It is the Police Department's job, not mine.

The police depend on residents to be their "eyes and ears."

- I am the victim and do not want to report it because it was just a minor theft.

It could be part of a developing pattern and the police need to know about it.

How to call the police

1. **Dial 911 for only emergencies.** You can also call the Tampa Police Department for non-emergencies at **(813)-231-6130**.

2. Quickly describe why you are calling.
3. Give your name, address, and phone number.
4. Give detailed suspect or vehicle description and last known location or direction of travel.
5. Stay calm. Remain on the phone to give any additional information.
6. When in doubt call **911**.

Note the following when you meet the officers:

- Date and time.
- Officer's name
- The officer will provide case number if applicable.

Special Notes:

Our community is currently collaborating with the Tampa Police Department to share resources and to combine resources in an effort to unite both groups through transparency.

Remember if you would like to join our community Neighborhood Watch (NW), please contact Sheryl Springer at sheryl@corylakenw.com.

The Tampa Police urge you to always go through dispatch; it is the quickest way to speak with an Officer. You can call dispatch for emergency by dialing **911** or for non-emergency by dialing **(813)-231-6130**.

Your Security Committee meets monthly, (**except** in March, June, September and December) on the 1st Monday @ 7:00 p.m. in the Beach Club.

(Adapted from the Official Website of Lonsdale, Minnesota)