



Public Safety: It Takes a Community

by Evert Palmer, City Manager

(The following commentary was published in the Folsom Telegraph on Feb. 27).

Any way you look at it, Folsom is a safe place to live, work and play. As Police Chief Cynthia Renaud recently reported to the City Council, we continue to enjoy a low crime rate despite media headlines that crime is increasing in the region and state. It is notable that Folsom's overall crime dropped 15 percent in the past year.

All City departments partner to ensure public safety and provide the great quality of life we enjoy in Folsom. Police respond to crimes and focus on crime prevention. Firefighters and paramedics handle fire prevention and suppression, as well as emergency medical response. Public Works keeps our streets well maintained. Parks and Recreation provides beautiful parks that are highly utilized.

Maintaining a safe community is not exclusively local government's task. Our community partners also play key roles. The Folsom Cordova Unified School District creates a safe environment for our youth at our highly esteemed schools. Local businesses and corporations provide jobs and share resources. Residents keep a watchful eye on their neighborhoods. Volunteers participate in the Citizens Assisting Public Safety (CAPS) program, and many service groups.

Statistics show that Folsom is overall a non-violent community, with property crime far more prevalent than violent crime. While the incidence of property crime is low, we should still take basic preventive measures to avoid becoming a victim. Remember that thieves look for easy targets. They break into cars when shopping bags, purses, cell phones and laptops are left in plain sight. They target homes with windows and doors left unlocked, or cars in the driveway with easily accessible garage door openers.

The Police Department encourages residents to become partners in crime prevention. Secure your valuables. Participate in Neighborhood Watch programs. Remain watchful and vigilant, and immediately report suspicious activity by calling 9-1-1.

You should know that our 9-1-1 dispatchers respond to 97 percent of calls in 10 seconds or less. That is a phenomenal rate within the industry and a source of local pride. Each year Folsom dispatchers answer approximately 100,000 calls, speeding help to those in need.

Traffic safety is another high priority for our community. The Police Department works closely with the City's Traffic Engineer to study physical factors that may contribute to collisions. And, the City obtains grant funding for programs to reduce the number of alcohol-involved and speed-related collisions. (PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR MORE)



This year the Police Department is placing a renewed focus on family and youth, as well as the business community. They are continuing to build solid relationships with local youth and bolstering efforts to disrupt criminal behavior and drug or alcohol use before it starts in the teen population. Police will also launch a community outreach program targeted to local businesses in the coming months.

You can help ensure that our community remains safe by participating in programs such as the Citizen's Academy, CERT disaster preparedness, Neighborhood Watch, and other volunteer programs listed on the City's website. Together we can enhance the overall quality of life that reflects the "Folsom Experience" -- a source of much pride for us all. I welcome your comments at epalmer@folsom.ca.us.