

Neighborhood News

EL PASO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE | April 2022

Quick Tip:

Work to prepare your property by creating defensible space by disposing of or relocating combustible material from around your house. Trimmed trees and bushes should allow ample space between your home and landscape vegetation. Keep your grass mowed short. Also, properly dispose of cut branches and leaves. Contact your local trash disposal company or visit www.wildlandfireRSG.org for options regarding slash programs or chipper programs to assist in the proper destruction of these materials.



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“Ready, Set, Go” Wildland fire preparedness program

The following article is a reprint from the May 2018 Neighborhood Newsletter. I thought it was important to share this information once again as we are entering into the high fire danger season in El Paso County

The fire season is a year-round reality in Colorado. This time of year, requires firefighters, first responders, local authorities and residents to be ready for the threat of wildland fire to include residential fires. The Ready, Set, Go (RSG)! Program works in collaboration with existing wildland fire public education efforts. This program is brought to the public in partnership with the fire service and emphasizes the common goal we all share with wildland fire preparedness. The following information in this article includes information extracted from the Wildland Fire Action Guide which can be viewed at www.wildlandfireRSG.org.

The main focus of Ready, Set, Go (RSG) is saving lives and property through advance planning. The Waldo Canyon and Black Forest Fires are daily reminders of the importance of being properly prepared for tragic events such as large wildland fires. “Each year, wildland fires consume hundreds of homes in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Studies show that as many as 80 percent of the homes lost to wildland fires could have been saved if their owners had followed simple fire-safe practices. In addition, wildland fire related deaths occur because people wait too long to leave their home.” Most recently, El

Paso County experienced the 117 Fire that destroyed 23 homes and displaced hundreds of people, to include their livestock and pets. Learning from these events is critical in order for people to be safer and for first responders to be more efficient during these critical incidents. The Ready, Set, Go Program has provided a great tool to make this process easier for homeowners.

As previously stated, the three main focal points of this program are Ready, Set, Go. Each of these areas are critical in the preparation phase and action piece, if required. Being Ready involves taking responsibility by creating defensible space zones around your home and property. Per RSG officials, defensible space is defined as “a buffer zone created by the removal of weeds, brush, and other wildland urban interface (WUI). Creating defensible space can decrease the fire damage to structures and allow space for firefighting operations.” A big part of this topic area involves giving special consideration to wind-driven embers which can travel up to a mile ahead of the flame front. The Fire Department recommends using non-combustible materials for fire-resistive plants in your landscaping plans and furthermore, emphasizes the importance of regular maintenance of your landscape and the creation of defensible space.

Other key points to consider during your preparation planning might include creating a Family Disaster Plan that includes meeting

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locations and communication plans. This plan should also include the evacuation and housing of large animals as it applies to your family. Plan and practice several different evacuation routes. For example, during the 117 Fire, first responders and homeowners experienced the confusion and what can happen if the one route you commonly use becomes blocked. It is critical to have multiple evacuation plans to include exiting your home. It is also important to assemble an emergency supply kit as recommended by the American Red Cross to meet your personal and family needs. Finally, consider appointing an out-of-area friend or relative as a point of contact to communicate with other family members. The second area to consider is Set which involves being alert. When a tragic event, such as a fire occurs, it is imperative to stay aware of the latest news and information on the event as provided by the local media, fire departments, local authorities and public safety agencies. The fires in El Paso County have recently shown how quickly a fire can spread, as witnessed in the 117 Fire and the Yoder Fire, specifically. Weather updates and direction of travel are extremely important, especially if living in large open areas. Preparing a Go Kit in the event of an evacuation is extremely important. Some crucial items that might be included in your kit are prescription medications, emergency supplies, important personal documents, electrical chargers, and pet food, if applicable. Another consideration might be turning off your electricity and natural gas/heating fuel at the shut-off point if the fire threat is imminent.



Other things to consider might include turning off pilot lights and air conditioning. Moving propane tanks, such as outdoor propane grill tanks, away from your house and backing your car into your driveway to facilitate a quick departure, if needed. If you find yourself trapped within your house, stay in your home until the fire passes and shelter away from outside walls. Place wet towels under your doors to help keep smoke and embers outside. If safe to do so after the fire passes, check your roof and extinguish any fires, sparks, or embers until firefighting crews can arrive. Most importantly, ensure you can exit your home if it catches fire and remember if it's hot inside the house, it is four or five times hotter outside. Please visit www.wildlandfireRSG.org for other items of importance and safety tips that might assist you in your preparation planning.



Finally, Go which includes acting early. This last phase usually involves pre-evacuation or evacuation preparedness or action. In most cases, you will be notified via media sources or emergency personnel/first responders that you are being evacuated. Remember, by leaving early you give your family the best chance of survival and it eliminates congestion on roads for firefighting crews. During this time, it is recommended you have your vehicles already loaded with emergency supplies and valuables and leave to a pre-determined location, if possible. Alert family and friends of your plans and close all doors and windows to your home. If you do not have the ability or time to relocate livestock, the Fire Department asks that you open gates so these animals can escape. Furthermore, previously opened gates provide access to firefighting crews to become more efficient in firefighting efforts. It is important to remember during this time, the safest thing you can do is evacuate and let the firefighters do their jobs. Choosing to stay could prevent firefighters or police officers from rescuing you and your family during severe fire behavior times. Finally, it is recommended by the American Red Cross to maintain a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and a three-day supply of non-perishable food for your family. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org.

“A Fire Adapted Community (FAC) is a community of local residents, fire and emergency responders, business owners, builders, civic groups, and leaders who take steps to increase their safety and become prepared for the threat of wildland fire.” The upcoming summer fire season is expected to be a high fire threat time as attested to by Fire Department personnel and within the media. A key part of FAC is having an increased understanding of wildland fire. Wildland fires don't only occur in forest vegetation, as witnessed in the Black Forest and Waldo Fires, they also occur where there is grasslands, open rangelands, prairielands, and agricultural land. Being actively engaged and pro-active in mitigation/ preparation efforts is imperative in the wildland fire solution.

As stated in the Wildland Fire Guide, “your Fire Department takes every precaution to help protect you and your property

from wildland fire. However, in a major wildland fire event, there may simply not be enough fire resources or firefighters to defend your home.” This guide emphasizes the importance of becoming a Fire Adapted Community (FAC) by utilizing multiple strategies to help mitigate and prepare your home, property, and family in the event of a wildland fire event. The guide provides tips and tools needed to prepare for a wildland fire threat; have situational awareness when a fire starts, and to act early as directed by local officials and first responders.

“Successfully preparing for a wildland fire enables you to take personal responsibility for protecting yourself, your family, and your property.”

Become a key leader in in creating and affecting change to improve safety for all involved!!! Please visit www.wildlandfireRSG.org for more information and helpful tips involving this program.



Upcoming Events

- Annual National Night Out: Tuesday, August 2, 2022. 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Neighborhood Watch

A neighborhood watch system is easy to establish, simply by getting to know your neighbors within your neighborhood. In a Neighborhood Watch community, neighbors keep watch on each other’s homes/property’s and are encouraged to report any suspicious activity to either the Sheriff’s Office Crime Prevention Coordinator or the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office dispatch center. As one of the most successful community/law enforcement partnerships in the United States, this program aids law enforcement by creating a closer sense of community among citizens and furthermore builds a strong relationship with Sheriff’s Office deputies. Neighbors who know each other become the Sheriff’s Office “eyes and ears” within that community and develop an awareness of unusual circumstances and suspicious behaviors.

To learn more about the program, please contact the Crime Prevention Coordinator at 719-520-7151 to schedule a meeting or go to www.epcsheriffsoffice.com under the **Community** tab for further details.

Crime Prevention

The El Paso County Sheriff’s Office is committed to helping our citizens keep themselves, their families, and their communities safe from crime, the fear of crime and neighborhood decay. Working collaboratively with other local law enforcement officials, the Sheriff’s Office assists to establish networking systems, provide educational materials, programs, training, and safety tutorials to promote pro-active crime prevention in our community. Through an active Community Oriented Policing philosophy, we believe that individual citizens should be empowered to work with law enforcement to help keep themselves and their families safe. Many programs we offer will provide tools that you can use to learn crime prevention strategies, engage other community members, and coordinate with local law enforcement to aid in crime prevention.

Crime Prevention Tips

Child Safety:

- Advise your children to never give out personal information to strangers and to tell you immediately if somebody asks.
- Educate your children on the importance of knowing how and when to use 911.
- Any time a situation has made a child uncomfortable they should tell a parent immediately.
- ***See something, Say Something**

Home:

- Place a metal or wooden rod in the track of sliding glass doors/windows.
- Have sufficient lighting at all household entrances.
- Do not hide keys; have a trusted person keep a spare.
- Explore the options for video doorbells and exterior cameras. These technologies are priceless when it comes to your safety and are extremely beneficial to law enforcement agencies when establishing suspect information or vehicle information involved in criminal activity.
- If you install a security system, make sure you are aware of the company's response policy and register your exterior cameras with the Sheriff's Office at www.epcsheriffsoffice.com.

Vehicle Safety:

- Keep your car in good working condition.
- ALWAYS lock your car door even if you are only away from the vehicle for a few minutes.
- Park in well-lit areas. There is a huge increase in catalytic converter thefts across the county. Please be aware of this crime and park in lit areas or a garage, if possible.
- Check the back seat when entering your vehicle.
- Remove all weapons from your unoccupied vehicle.

Personal Safety:

- When walking, stay in well-lit areas; avoid bushes, alleys, unmarked trails, etc.
- Walk in groups or pairs, if possible.
- Be aware of your surroundings; look around to see if there are other people in the area.
- If something or someone doesn't seem right, "See something, Say something."

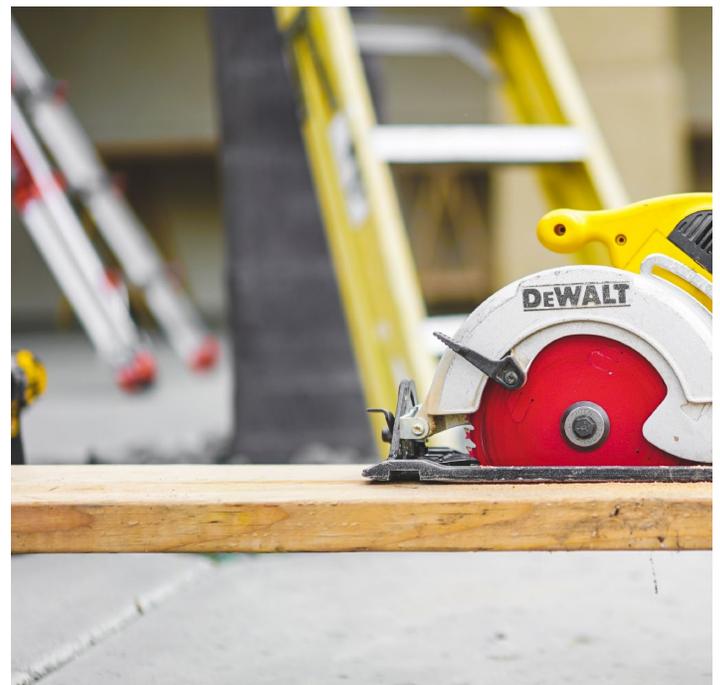
Register for the El Paso-Teller County Emergency Notification System (or Reverse 911). This system is used to advise residents of any situation that threatens harm to life and/or property or is deemed dangerous by officials. This could be man-made disasters, crime, pandemics and hazardous materials incidents, missing persons, evacuation notifications, neighborhood emergencies and similar important issues. To register for this service or for more information go to www.elpasoteller911.org.

Schedule the Crime Prevention Coordinator to come to your residence and conduct a CPTED evaluation (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design). This evaluation is a free service and takes about 30 minutes to complete. A few of the items evaluated are lights, locks, landscape, and security areas. This evaluation will give you **"options to consider"** to make your residence more secure.

****You can now go to the Community Crime Map which is a Lexis Nexis product to check the crime activity in your neighborhood or community. It will show the same numbers that I present at meetings with some limitations such as names, addresses, etc. for privacy reasons but it is a great snapshot of activity in your areas. You can also utilize the map in your travels if you plan on traveling out of state. This product is an excellent means of showing crime activity across the nation. ****

HELP US HELP YOU BY CHOOSING NOT TO BECOME A VICTIM OF CRIME AND MAKING IT TOUGH FOR CRIMINALS TO COMMIT THEIR CRIMES.

****ADDITIONAL NOTE/REQUEST – The residential and commercial building industry is ever increasing. With that, home builders and commercial builders are experiencing huge losses in lumber and associated lumber products at their jobsites. Residential home builders' hours are typically 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM. If you witness a vehicle at a jobsite after those hours loading lumber or other materials, please contact the Sheriff's Office or Colorado Springs Police Department IMMEDIATELY to report your viewings. A good vehicle description or license plate is extremely helpful if you can acquire one SAFELY!! If not, at a minimum, please report the incident****



FOR EMERGENCIES: DIAL 9-1-1

El Paso County Sheriff's Office Dispatch (non-emergency crime reporting): **390-5555**

EPSO Telephone Reporting System (for minor crimes without suspect information): **520-7111**

EPSO Traffic Hotline (for reporting problem areas or traffic violations): **520-7192**

EPSO Tip Line (for reporting suspicious activity or the location of wanted persons): **520-7777**

Always remember to report criminal activity or suspicious behavior promptly.

For more information, contact the Crime Prevention Coordinator: **520-7151**

Going on Vacation?

Going on vacation can sometimes be stressful. Let us help you relax a bit. The El Paso County Sheriff's Office provides a service in unincorporated El Paso County when Patrol Deputies or Citizen's Patrol volunteers are available. During these times, they will conduct directed patrol checks at your properties while you are away.

To participate please go to www.epcsheriffsoffice.com and under Services select Vacation Check Request Form.



Interested in learning more about the Sheriff's Office?

Are you interested in learning more about what the Sheriff's Office has to offer residents of Unincorporated El Paso County? Request a representative from one of our numerous units to come and speak with your group.

To participate please go to www.epcsheriffsoffice.com and under **Community** select **Speakers Bureau** and submit the Speaker Request.

Crimes in Your Neighborhood: Highlights From *Jan 1 - Apr 6*

District 1

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	3
Burglaries	4
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	15
Thefts	32
Criminal Mischief	8
Fraud/Forgery	9
Traffic Incidents	117

District 2

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	0
Burglaries	1
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	0
Thefts	38
Criminal Mischief	10
Fraud/Forgery	9
Traffic Incidents	71

District 3

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	13
Burglaries	15
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	15
Thefts	87
Criminal Mischief	41
Fraud/Forgery	12
Traffic Incidents	224

District 4

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	14
Burglaries	11
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	8
Thefts	39
Criminal Mischief	20
Fraud/Forgery	12
Traffic Incidents	178

District 5

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	19
Burglaries	12
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	19
Thefts	41
Criminal Mischief	25
Fraud/Forgery	10
Traffic Incidents	66

District 6

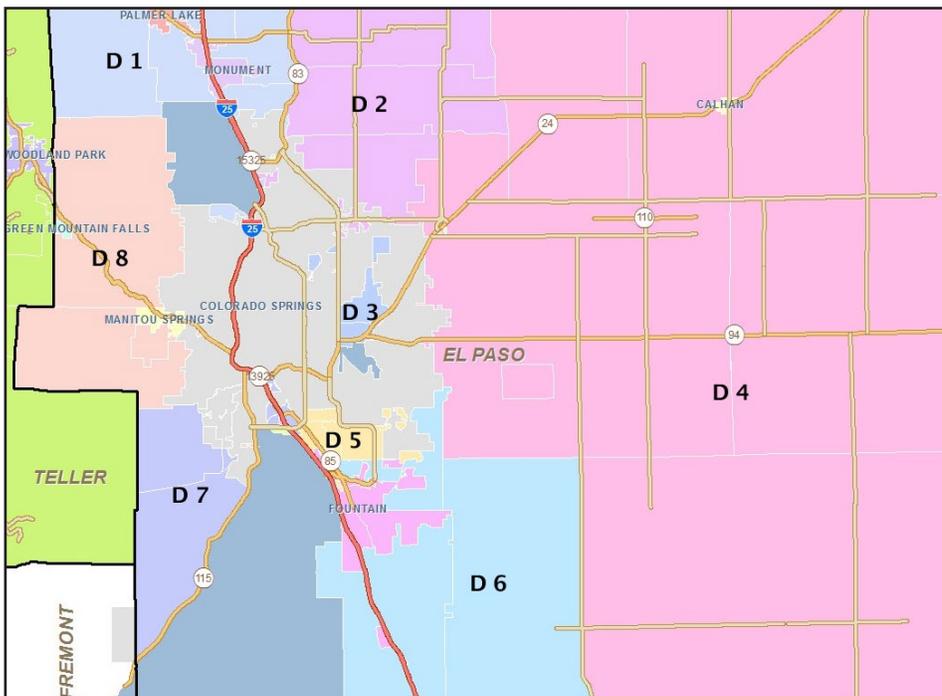
Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	10
Burglaries	5
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	6
Thefts	24
Criminal Mischief	12
Fraud/Forgery	6
Traffic Incidents	38

District 7

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	8
Burglaries	5
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	6
Thefts	24
Criminal Mischief	13
Fraud/Forgery	3
Traffic Incidents	33

District 8

Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVT)	2
Burglaries	1
Criminal Trespass Auto (CTA)	6
Thefts	8
Criminal Mischief	4
Fraud/Forgery	6
Traffic Incidents	4



District 1—Woodmoor/Canterbury, Gleneagle, Kings Deer, Club Villas, Palmer Lake, Monument

District 2—Black Forest, Wissler Ranch, Hawk Ridge

District 3—Cimarron Hills, Constitution Hills, Claremont Ranch, Park Vista & Siefert

District 4—Woodmen Hills, Falcon, areas east of Meridian Road

District 5—Security, Fountain Valley, Colorado Centre, Clearview Estates, Southmoor

District 6—Widefield and Little Ranches area

District 7—Stratmoor Valley, Stratmoor Hills, B Street, Hwy 115

District 8—West Colorado Avenue, Ute Pass, Green Mountain Falls, Cascade, Rampart Range

****The above statistics reflect the various assigned Sheriff's Office districts and furthermore illustrate a "snapshot" into what the Sheriff's Office is experiencing across El Paso County. If you are interested in individual neighborhoods or areas, please contact Mr. Brent Ambuehl, Criminal Intelligence Unit, Crime Prevention Coordinator for the Sheriff's Office at (719) 520-7151 or email at brentambuehl@elpasoco.com for more specific information. You can also utilize the Community Crime Map from Lexis Nexis to provide a snapshot of the criminal activity in your neighborhood or community. The map can be accessed at www.communitycrimemap.com****