



# Olympia Police Department



## Block Watch Quarterly

Winter 2009

### CrimeReports.com

#### *Monitoring Police Reports Online*

The Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Yelm police departments (member agencies in the Thurston County Law Enforcement Records Consortium) are pleased to announce that they are now participating in the CrimeReports.com on-line crime alerting and mapping service. This service provides easy to read crime maps and automated public safety alerts for free to the public. It can be accessed at <http://www.crimereports.com> or via a link on the participating cities' web sites.

The new service permits citizens to search and view reported crime activity on a user-friendly, Google-style map for any location within the boundaries of the four cities. Searches can be set for crime type, time period and address. The available data includes information about Level III sex offenders. A handy overlay is available to show which events have occurred within a certain distance from a specified address. Built-in analytical features can be employed to show data graphically or in table form. Citizens can also sign up to receive automatic daily, weekly or monthly email alerts if/when crimes occur near their home, office, local school, etc. Incident data is updated every weekday night and includes:

- Incident
- Date
- Location (by block)
- Event identification/case number
- Brief crime incident description

"CrimeReports.com will prove particularly valuable to those in our communities who want to stay informed about what is going on in their neighborhoods," said Olympia Chief Gary Michel. The CrimeReports.com service is made possible because of the advent of the Global Justice XML data model (GJXDM) – the authorized data sharing protocol developed and supported by the United States Department of Justice. Using GJXDM as the underlying technology gives the application versatility and flexibility and allows for easy future integration at the regional, State and national levels.

Direct links to local crime report data are currently available on the City of Lacey's web site (<http://www.ci.lacey.wa.us/police/Lacey%20Police%20Department%20old.htm>) and the City of Olympia's web site (<http://www.olympiawa.gov/cityservices/police/new/>) as well as through the main CrimeReports.com web site.

- *Dick Machlan, Administrative Services Manager*



## OPD Profile

Sgt. John Hutchings has been in law enforcement for almost 30 years, with 24 of those at the Olympia Police Department. He's worked in Walking Patrol, Detectives, Traffic, Crime Prevention, SWAT and DARE.

Eight years ago, Sgt. Hutchings implemented Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for local officers. This training educates officers about mental illness, explains resources available in our community and introduces strategies for managing difficult situations. Almost 250 officers have attended the 40-hour class locally. In addition, Sgt. Hutchings has introduced the program to law enforcement in both Australia and the United Kingdom.

Involvement in CIT and the Thurston County Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team led Sgt. Hutchings to apply for and receive a Fulbright Scholarship. His research is focused on the effectiveness of debriefing officers after a traumatic event.

Recently, Sgt. Hutchings was chosen to lead the Special Operations Division, where he will be riding a motorcycle on patrol for the first time in his career.

## Heard of Phishing? Now, There's *Vishing*

The Internet Crime Complaint Center is reporting a new tactic identity thieves are using to obtain personal information, especially account numbers. The scammers are able to use certain databases to create an automatic dialer by exploiting a weakness discovered in older versions of software that integrates phone communication and digital Internet voice calling systems. This allows thousands of calls to be made every hour.

Using a legitimate company name, the system leaves messages with a request to call back a specific toll free number. When they call, the victim is instructed to enter personal information. Because it is such common practice to enter a credit card or account number over the phone, people are falling victim to fraud and identity theft without giving it a second thought. This scam is also taking place via email that again requests response to a toll free number.

Besides being aware of this particular method of identity theft, practicing caution whenever asked to give out personal information is a good way to prevent victimization as the crooks get even more clever.

## An Update on Vehicle Prowling

The final tally for reported vehicle prowls in 2008 was **619**. This is the highest number since 2005. Additionally, reports indicate that thieves are breaking locks and windows with more frequency to get at valuables.

Besides practicing basic crime prevention techniques, citizens can also help by calling in suspicious people or activity in the neighborhood. A recent arrest for vehicle prowling was made as a result of an alert person quickly reporting the crime in progress.