



Monthly Newsletter

April 2022

County lends radar speed guns to volunteers

If your quiet neighborhood street seems to have become a speedway, the county has a program for you!

For some years, the Sacramento County Department of Transportation (DOT) has been lending radar speed “guns” to citizens so they can monitor and report speeders on residential streets. This Neighborhood Speed Watch Program falls under the department’s [Care About Neighborhoods](#) initiative.



According to Bernardo Ramirez, an assistant civil engineer with DOT, the county has a total of four radar speed guns it will lend to volunteers anywhere in the county. To participate, the volunteers must agree to use the device to verify the speed of an offending vehicle and to record the location, date and time of the speeding incident, the license plate number, color and, if possible, the make and model of the vehicle, then submit the information to the county.

“We don’t have any policing authority,” Ramirez explained. “We don’t issue citations. Instead, when we receive the report, we send the registered owner of the vehicle a letter letting them know that they were seen speeding.”

The letter notes “In the interest of neighborhood safety and livability, we encourage you and other drivers of your vehicle to drive at the posted speed limit and exercise additional caution when traveling through neighborhood streets.” It also points out that no tickets are being issued and the incident will not be added to any public records. “However,” it states, “we would like to make you aware of this situation so that drivers of your vehicle will exercise more caution in the future.”

Ramirez said such letters may be particularly useful in alerting parents that their teenagers are breaking speed laws.

How it Works

Ramirez said volunteering for the program is very easy. Just contact him at the

department. Then, depending on availability, DOT will provide the radar gun.

“We schedule a time to meet with a resident, usually at their homes,” Ramirez explained. “We will go over the rules of conduct and get signatures acknowledging those rules. We then train the person on use of the equipment and hand it to them. A second agreement is signed by the resident acknowledging they have received the equipment and are responsible for its care.”

Ramirez said there is no fixed time limit for how long a volunteer can use the radar device. “Most people return it within one to four months,” he said.

He also noted that only a county device can be used in this program. A volunteer cannot purchase his own radar speed gun to take part. Ramirez explained: “In order to obtain information on vehicle ownership as a government agency we have to adhere to state regulations in our purpose for requesting and maintaining that confidential information. For this reason, we cannot use data that was not obtained under our guidance.”

If you are interested in volunteering for the program, you may contact Ramirez at (916) 874-1630 or email him at ramirez@SacCounty.net.

Protect your car from gas theft

With the recent steep rise in gasoline prices, incidents of gas theft from parked cars have been on the rise, too.

In some cases, thieves have simply removed the gas cap and used a siphon to get the gas. However, because locking gas caps have become more common, thieves have found other methods.



According to Kelley Blue Book, some thieves will crawl under a larger vehicle, such as a pickup or large truck, and cut the rubber filler neck leading to the tank in order to siphon out the fuel. In other cases, they may drill a hole in the tank to drain it. The cost of repairing or replacing a gas tank damaged in this way can exceed \$1,000.

To help protect your car from fuel theft, experts advise that you take the same steps we have recently advised to protect yourself from catalytic converter theft. Experts suggest the following:

- Park your car in your garage. The hassle of cleaning out the garage may seem small in comparison to the cost of a damaged fuel tank.
- If you park in a driveway, park as close to your house as possible, ideally in a well-lit area.
- If your car has an alarm, arm it whenever you leave your vehicle.
- If you park on the street, orient your vehicle so that its fuel door is positioned into the street, thereby forcing the thief to expose himself to passersby.
- If you have to use a public garage, park in a well-lit, highly trafficked area, such as near the entrance or exit or near a stairwell.
- Avoid parking anywhere for an extended period of time. If you're going on a trip, take an Uber or a cab to the airport rather than leaving your car unattended in the long-term lot.
- Consider installing a locking gas cap, even if your fuel door locks.

Finally, call 911 if you see suspicious behavior, such as someone putting a siphon into a gas tank or prowling around parked cars.

Don't get caught without vehicle security

In late March, a brand-new, high-end SUV was stolen from the driveway of a WDDNA member on Wycombe Drive.

The SUV was specially equipped and had all the bells and whistles associated with luxury vehicles. However, according to the owner, the one thing it did not have was a live satellite GPS tracking system that might have assisted law enforcement in finding and apprehending the thieves.



"The car had been set up for GPS," the owner noted, "but the dealer never told us that we had to go through a procedure to activate it."

This unfortunate incident highlights the importance of vehicle security systems.

[Kelley Blue Book](#) recently noted that there has been a major increase in car thefts in the past two years – in some states by as much as 40%. California, Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico and Washington, D.C., are the top five areas with rising car theft rates. Bakersfield holds the distinction of having the highest auto theft rate in the nation. <https://www.kbb.com/car-news/car-theft-spiked-during-pandemic/>

According to law enforcement sources, the majority of car thefts are the work of professional car thieves. In many cases, stolen cars are taken to chop shops and cannibalized for parts. In other cases, they are stolen for resale out of state or out of the country.

To minimize chances of having your car stolen, experts suggest the following:

- **Install an audible alarm system and anti-theft device.** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends installing an audible alarm system if your car did not come with one. In addition, consider using a visible anti-theft device such as The Club steering wheel lock (shown above).
- **Install a vehicle immobilizer system.** Many car owners choose to install a vehicle immobilizer system to prevent theft. These systems incorporate such things as smart keys, kill switches and wireless ignition authentication. They disable the vehicle to prevent unauthorized individuals from driving it away. Many cars on the market today, even those as old as 2008, have engine immobilizers from the factory. Aftermarket systems are also available.
- **Install a Tracking System.** A tracking system may assist in recovering a vehicle after it has been stolen. It uses wireless and/or GPS technology to emit a signal showing your vehicle's location to the police or a monitoring service. Be sure to ask about the availability of a such a built-in system when you purchase a car. If your car does not have a factory-installed system, aftermarket systems are available.

Rio soon to install parking lot gate

Rio Americano High School will soon have a new gate across the entrance to its student parking lot designed to prevent late night gatherings and unsafe “donut” driving activities on school property.

In a meeting with the Wilhaggin Del Dayo Neighborhood Association traffic committee, Principal Cliff Kelly announced that a gate is expected to be installed sometime this summer, along with bollards to prevent drivers from going over the lawns to avoid the gate.

Our WDDNA traffic committee asked for the meeting to discuss concerns that our night-shift patrols have routinely had to disperse cars of teenagers gathered in the parking lot late at night. In addition, residents near the school have frequently reported hearing the squeal of tires late at night caused by drivers doing donuts in the lot.

Kelly, who was appointed principal last May, acknowledged that the parking lot has become a magnet for such activity. He said he had been working with the school district to solve the problem.

Kelly said he and his staff also have been trying to address the problem of the school’s student parking shortage, a problem which forces many students to park on neighboring residential streets. He noted that some students began using [Sacramento Regional Transit District’s SmARt Ride](#) shuttle service, which was free during the pandemic. The on-demand service uses small vans and drops students off across the street from the school. “We will be suggesting in our newsletter that more students try using that service,” Kelly noted.

He also reported that, in adherence to the new state law, school start time will shift to 8:30 a.m. beginning this fall. Dismissal will be at 3:30 p.m.

Don't share WDDNA's deputy email address

Please do not share the email address we provide to you for contacting our WDDNA patrol deputies.

That email is proprietary and may only be used by active paid members of the Wilhaggin Del Dayo Neighborhood Association. It should not be shared with non-members or posted on any online sites, such as NextDoor.com or Facebook.

The deputy email (wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com) can only be used by our patrol deputies while they are working for us patrolling our neighborhood. It is not part of the wider Sacramento County Sheriff’s Department email system.

Although our deputies patrol our entire neighborhood and can respond to any emergency or neighborhood security issue here, the WDDNA email address is separate and ONLY available to paid members as a benefit of membership.

There is also a danger in sharing the address with others. When non-members are given our deputy email address, they may believe that it will allow them to contact regular Sheriff’s deputies. Since that is not the case, they might mistakenly use the email address during an emergency situation instead of calling 911. If a WDDNA deputy was not on patrol at that time, the email would go unanswered until the next shift, leaving the sender

in a potentially dangerous situation.

On several occasions recently, the email address was shared on NextDoor.com. Fortunately, we requested that those posts be taken down and our members kindly complied. However, if more instances should arise, it may be necessary for us to change our system so that members would only be able to contact deputies through our website.

To avoid our having to change our system, please do not share our deputy email address with others. And thank you for supporting our association.

'Get Rattled' snake avoidance clinic April 23

Spring is rattlesnake mating season, when male rattlers are more likely to be out and about looking for females. It's a good time to make sure your dog has been trained to avoid a confrontation with rattlesnakes.

A rattlesnake avoidance dog training clinic is scheduled for Saturday, April 23, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Ashton Park. It is being conducted by the Nevada company, [Get Rattled](#), which has held similar clinics in the past. The clinic is designed to teach dogs to recognize and avoid the sight, sound and smell of rattlesnakes.

The fee for the training is \$110 for a new dog or \$85 for reinforcement training if your dog has gone through the program in the past.

The clinic is being organized through Mission Oaks Recreation & Park District and pre-registration is required. Appointments are available online at <https://www.morpd.com>. For information, you can call the district at (916) 488-2810.

Q&A

Q: What is the association's policy in regard to publicizing the efforts of other nonprofit organizations or disseminating information about political action groups working on neighborhood projects?

A: Many members of our community – including members of WDDNA – are active in a wide array of community service organizations, nonprofit groups and localized political action committees. We applaud their commitment to helping the community.

WDDNA is also a nonprofit. Our charter is solely focused on hiring off-duty Sheriff's deputies to patrol our streets and providing information about protecting the lives and property of our members. While we acknowledge that other groups and organizations are also invested in worthwhile projects, we believe we are most effective when we adhere exclusively to our core mission and focus only on that mission in our communications to members.

HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you

feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department:

1. Call the Sheriff's Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff's Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff's Department non-emergency line).

GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it via email at wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com.

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