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JSO Launches Online Crime Reporting



From the Sheriff's Desk

Sheriff
John
Rutherford

What better way to start the New Year than with an exciting innovation in our technology? A program that makes it easier for citizens to get a police report for minor property crimes that do not involve a suspect? And they can do it right at their own computer! Crime victims can also file their report in Spanish.

As an added feature, citizens now have one easy website location where they can report their crime tips to police, also. This too, can be done in the privacy of their home or from any computer. This feature is anonymous, and will be especially helpful to our officers as they gather information, investigate it, and then use that criminal intelligence to help us solve and prevent crime.

On December 11 we demonstrated, for the media, our new Online Crime Reporting program. If you want to see the demonstration just go to jaxsheriff.org - on the front page under NEWS. Click on the video of the news conference and watch the online demonstration. I am very proud of the hard work our Community Affairs team and our technology folks here at JSO put into making this possible.

They worked with a vendor to create a very simple, easy-to-use reporting system that coaches the user all the way through. Historically, victims of minor property crimes had to wait for an available police officer to respond, after the officer attended to higher priority calls. Online reporting will alleviate the wait for those people who choose to report this way, and they will get their police report right at their home computer.

However, if you still want an officer in person, all you have to do is call 630-0500 and request one. If not, go to jaxsheriff.org and click on ONLINE CRIME REPORTING. Whether reported directly to an officer or online, all information we receive about a crime is fully integrated into the information used by our officers on the beat. The four types of crimes that

can be reported online are Theft; Theft from a Motor Vehicle; Vehicle Burglary; or Vandalism (including graffiti). There are a few rules: There cannot be a suspect; damages and losses cannot exceed \$5,000; the complainant must be 18 years of age or older to file a report; and the report must be filled out from a computer where the citizen can receive email.

A sworn police officer reviews all the reports that are submitted, and the victim will be contacted if more information is needed. A report is generated and emailed to the victim.

The Crime Tips feature is especially helpful to JSO. Citizens provide JSO with a lot of good information about crime, traffic complaints, and abandoned vehicles they see on the side of the road. They stop officers on the street, they call us, they email us. We appreciate all of this information, and we are committed to responding to it.

With this online tool for providing us tips, we can merge this information into our intelligence gathering and enforcement activities. If the citizens choose to identify themselves so an officer can follow up if needed, they have that option. But the tip program also works even if the person making the report chooses to be anonymous. And, like the online crime reporting system, it can be done in Spanish.

We "beta tested" the online reporting and tip system during the months of October and November. During this 60-day period we received 55 online crime reports and netted 70 tips. Fifty-five of those tips were investigative complaints, 13 were traffic complaints and two were complaints about junk/abandoned vehicles.

As a result of those tips we made five felony arrests for cocaine possession and trafficking of prescription medication; we wrote 68 citations, made two other arrests and seized two vehicles.

Hopefully, you won't need to use our online crime reporting system and you won't observe suspicious or criminal activity that should be reported, but if you do, we're here - and as always, ready to help.

I hope your New Year is a safe and healthy one.