

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO THE POLICE

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The Crime & Safety Committee of the Camelot Neighborhood Association urges everybody to promptly notify the police of any suspicious activity. Responding to such calls is an extremely effective crime prevention tool for the police. Each response creates a police presence in the neighborhood, which has the possibility of:

- Encouraging a would-be criminal to leave the neighborhood.
- Interrupting a criminal act which is about to be committed.
- Arresting an individual who committed a crime or has an outstanding warrant.
- Providing information related to other crimes.

But what defines suspicious activity? According to NPO John Capers, that's almost impossible to answer because different things are suspicious to different people. It depends on their life experiences, familiarity with the location, and circumstances. Basically, anything that doesn't look or seem right to someone, making them pause to wonder about it or believe that a crime has been committed or is possibly being committed or about to be committed, is suspicious to that person.

If you think that the suspicious activity warrants timely police presence or you think that your safety or another's safety is being threatened, then call 911. If the activity isn't quite as clear cut to you or there doesn't seem to be any imminent danger, you can use the police non-emergency number of 972-485-4840.

Regardless of which number you use, be prepared to provide the following information in as much detail as possible.

WHERE the activity is occurring.

WHAT exactly is occurring; i.e., what is making you suspicious.

WHEN did the activity happen.

WHO is involved in the activity (how many people, sex, age, race, hair color, clothes from top to bottom including shoes, obvious body markings or accessories; make/model/age/color/license of vehicle; direction of travel; any other details you can think of).

The call taker will prioritize your report based on the information you provide, and police officers will be dispatched according to that priority. And you can ask that you not be identified or that the officers not contact you.

With all of us being alert and notifying police of suspicious people or activity, Camelot will continue to be a safe neighborhood in which to live and raise a family.

*Becky Thurmond and Lowell Hyatt
Camelot Neighborhood Association Crime & Safety Committee*